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Disbanding CEMA May Prove Difficult

PM2503090191 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 18 Mar 91 Second Edition p5

[Editorial commentary: "We Will Wait Another Month..."]

[Text] No one has any doubts that CEMA, which celebrated its 42d anniversary in January, will cease to exist in the near future. Indeed, this was expected in February. It was planned to hold the last, 46th CEMA session at heads of government level in Budapest, but the session was postponed.

March has not made the situation any clearer. A meeting of the CEMA countries' permanent representatives in Moscow on 14-15 March was held in an atmosphere of sharp differences. The sides have given their experts one month to study the possibility of bringing their positions closer together. The next meeting of permanent representatives is scheduled for April. Disbanding CEMA has proved far more difficult than forming it. Why?

CEMA is a child of its time. It came into being and operated within the framework of a planned, directive-based, centralized system of economic management.

It is easy to debate CEMA's shortcomings and problems from the vantage point of the nineties. Hungarian Professor Kalman Pecsi, who heads the European Integration Scientific Society, is right when he says that the "biggest flaw" in CEMA's system of ties is the fact that "the countries' national economies are isolated from the influence of the world market and competition." As a result, "the East European countries' industrial potential in its present form is unsuitable for integration into the world economy."

But there is another truth about CEMA that cannot possibly be ignored in practical matters. Real economic space has developed within the CEMA framework over the course of four decades. Thousands of threads link the CEMA countries together. We are referring to production cooperation relations, interdependence between energy systems, and a wealth of other specific results produced by many years of cooperation.

Severing traditional ties would lead to a sharp drop in the volume of production, the closure of entire sectors in industry, and massive unemployment. The first steps toward collaboration on the basis of real market relations are proving very difficult for us. The CEMA countries have agreed, for example, to make the transition in mutual trade to transactions in freely convertible currency at world prices from 1 January this year. Few would deny the need for and urgency of this step: It is the only way to join world economic ties and place our relations on a workable basis. But what is happening in reality? Neither we nor our neighbors have hard currency. So we have no means of paying for our purchases. Consequently, a sudden leap from the old to the new is impossible: There is going to have to be some sort of transitional period, where we could engage in currency clearing and barter deals.

Few would deny that there is an objective coincidence of interests between the Soviet Union and its neighbors in the economic sphere. The CEMA countries have a vital interest in our country supplying them with energy and certain kinds of raw materials and machinery. In its turn, the Soviet Union obtains goods—primarily from the East European region—without which a number of sectors in the national economy could not function normally and it would be impossible to meet the population's requirements for medicines, clothing, footwear, and so forth. Having admitted all this, we should also admit something else: There must be a joint search for modern forms of cooperation.

The Soviet side believes that a new organization of multilateral economic cooperation, CEMA's legal successor, would help to restore the fabric of this collaboration. This view is also held by Bulgaria, Vietnam, Cuba, Mongolia, and Romania.

Hungary, Poland, and Czechoslovakia primarily link the solution of their economic problems to developing bilateral relations with the Soviet Union and other CEMA partners, establishing production cooperation within the framework of the new alliance contracted between these three states, and joining the integration processes in Western Europe.

The disagreements are real. How different all this is from the recent period of total conformity and unanimity reducing us to universal stagnation! Well, we shall work together to seek compromise and bring our positions closer. That is the only way now is to build good-neighborly, mutually advantageous relations between our country and its neighbors.

Churkin on Resuming Ties with Dominica

LD2103225591 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1455 GMT 21 Mar 91

[By TASS diplomatic correspondents Oleg Palovko and Leonid Timofeyev]

[Text] Moscow, 21 Mar (TASS)—The Soviet Union assumes that "the normalization of Soviet-Dominican relations will encourage the constructive development of contacts and ties between the two countries and peoples and the consolidation of their friendly character." This was stated at a briefing in Moscow today by Vitaliy Churkin, chief of the USSR Foreign Ministry's information directorate, commenting on the signing by the president of the Dominican Republic of a decree concerning the normalization of diplomatic relations between the USSR and that country.

It is common knowledge that relations between the two countries have formally existed since 1945. Now it is intended to accredit non-resident ambassadors: the USSR ambassador to Venezuela in Santo Domingo, and the Dominican Republic's ambassador to the FRG in Moscow.

The USSR Foreign Ministry spokesman said that the Soviet Union has "received with satisfaction the news that the president of the Dominican Republic has signed a decree on the normalization of relations between our countries."

Shevardnadze Calls for Middle East Conference

LD2403101991 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 0805 GMT 24 Mar 91

[By TASS correspondent Dmitriy Shishkov]

[Excerpt] San Francisco, 24 Mar (TASS)—Eduard Shevardnadze, president of the Soviet Foreign Political Association, has expressed support for the holding of a regional conference on the Near East. He was addressing the participants of a U.S. national conference on "Understanding Arab Perspectives: Settlement and Reconstruction after the Gulf War," held here on Saturday.

The prominent Soviet political figure was able to take part in the forum thanks to a direct satellite relay from Moscow to the hall in the Fairmont Hotel, where more than 500 representatives of U.S. political and business circles and of the Arab states, the Palestinians, and Israel had gathered.

The former Soviet foreign minister stressed that a necessary condition for the talks to be held was that the Palestinians should have the right to form their own delegation. He said Israel's refusal to have anything to do with representatives of the Palestinians, mainly because they are members of the PLO or actively support it, was merely a tactic to drag out the resolution of the question. [passage omitted]

'New Political Equation' Emerges in Middle East

LD2303204391 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 1500 GMT 23 Mar 91

[From the "International Panorama" program hosted by Nikolay Shishlin]

[Excerpts] First, on the order of relations following the end of the Gulf war, I believe that a new political equation has now emerged there. [passage omitted] As little as I want to sound prophetic, I am convinced—absolutely convinced—that Iraq will not be able to return to the state it was in August of last year, that is, before it started its aggression against Kuwait. Clouds have been thickening over the PLO and its leader Yasir 'Arafat. There is a penalty to be paid for assisting the aggressor in its aggression against Kuwait, and the penalty may turn out to be very high, even the highest possible. But of course a new serious element in the whole situation is the normalization of relations between Iran and Saudi Arabia. Everything there has now started to change. Consequently, our foreign policy is now beginning to face new requirements, and absolutely obvious requirements at that.

It is not just growth in our customary links with our traditional partners in the zone of the Middle East that is required. What is needed is a qualitatively new level of relations with the Gulf countries, that is, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Bahrain, and the United Arab Emirates. Ties with Egypt, Syria, and other Arab states need to be substantially expanded. In other words, the work to be done in the Middle East is gigantic. I want to give a special mention to the fact that in the light of this future work, the absence of diplomatic relations between our country and Israel is a legacy of the evil past. The restoration of diplomatic relations with Israel is simply a matter of top priority. Though I want to say that following our press, it is possible to see the view point that the Middle Eastern equation generally cannot be resolved before the end of this century. I think that this viewpoint has no future, considering that the actual political equation has changed and, anyway, now is not the time to make these depressing claims. But this is the time for active energetic action and for getting our minds and imagination to work. [passage omitted]

International Review on Gulf, Israel

LD2403223191 Moscow All-Union Radio First Program Radio-1 Network in Russian 1230 GMT 24 Mar 91

["The World This Week: International Review" program with IZVESTIYA political observer Aleksandr Yevgeniyevich Bovin, Moscow Radio political observer Nikolay Vladimirovich Shishlin, and Moscow Radio commentator Viktor Nikolayevich Levin]

[Text] [Levin] Hello, esteemed comrades. We present for your attention the "International Review" program. Taking part in it today are Aleksandr Yevgeniyevich Bovin, a political observer for IZVESTIYA, Nikolay

Vladimirovich Shishlin, a political observer for Moscow Radio; and Viktor Nikolayevich Levin, a commentator for Moscow radio.

We will begin our conversation with the situation that is now developing regarding events in the Persian Gulf region—the post-crisis settlement, so to speak. That is problem number one now. A search is on for ways to achieve stable peace in that region and for the approaches to the whole range of problems in the Middle East, principally a settlement of Arab-Israeli relations. This is also accompanied by the question of the very great difficulties confronting the Iraqi population as a consequence of the embargo on supplies of foodstuffs and other goods, still in force to a significant degree. This subject was the focal point at the talks held in Moscow this week with both FRG Foreign Minister Genscher and British Foreign Secretary Hurd. Strictly speaking, Baker's visit, that ended at the end of last week, was also devoted to a significant extent to these problems. We will today principally discuss the direction the search for a solution is proceeding.

[Bovin] The main question cannot be resolved. That is the Arab-Israeli conflict. Everybody knows that is the source of what is going on there, and the talking is mostly about that. But this conflict cannot be resolved now. It will be left for sometime in the 21st century. We can only talk about it.

[Shishlin] I will not dispute that point of view.

[Bovin] Fine, that is true. That is what I think. There are more concrete things that need to be resolved. For instance, it is necessary to somehow clarify the situation in Iraq itself. The Americans are taking a fairly hard line. They are demanding the complete destruction of all chemical and bacteriological weapons in Iraq. They also have a whole series of demands in the nature of reparations. Only after that will the consider the matter closed. Parallel to that, an uprising is going on in Iraq itself. On the one hand, in the southeast, around al-Basrah, the Shi'ite population are seething—with variable success, but they are seething—and all the time, evidently, there is some kind of energy on the part of their brother, Iran. In the northwest, the Kurdish population have risen up. Judging by what is being said and written in the West, they have liberated large territories, also with variable success. Of course, Saddam Husayn now [word indistinct] in his actions, as the Americans are not allowing his air force to take off. He can transfer some kind of troops, but the Americans are not allowing either his airplanes or his helicopters to take off. They shot down one airplane a few days ago for this reason. In general, I have the impression that Saddam Husayn is finished. It will take some time yet; either he will be killed or he will go off somewhere. In short, his regime will end. The common view both us and the Americans hold is that, all the same, the disintegration of Iraq must not be allowed.

[Levin] Its Lebanonization, as they have now started....

[Bovin, interrupting] Yes. Incidentally, I think that the Turks and others there would like to get a piece of the action.

[Levin] They want to chip off a bit for themselves.

[Bovin] Yes, of course. They have long been arguing there over the al-Mawsil region and others. That is the first set of issues now lying on the surface there. The second is Kuwati. Rather strange events are also going on there. The amir has arrived, and it looks as though everything has been restored, but the people have begun demanding democracy. The war somehow shook up the whole of that society and showed the full impotence of that monarchic regime. It did not resist even for a minute. People are demanding the restoration of parliament and some kind of minimum of democracy. In general, some shake-ups are going on there. The Kuwaiti government has now resigned, and evidently something is going to change.

[Levin] Aleksandr Yevgeniyevich, the following thought occurs to me: In general, under the monarchic regime, the Kuwaitis lived very well on the economic plane, but still they need democracy.

[Bovin] Man cannot live by bread aone. That biblical truth turns out to be profound. They definitely did live better then. We do not have to make comparisons now.

They really did live splendidly, but there is a need for talking as well as listening.

[Shishlin] Nonetheless, I will venture to add a few words to your discussion. In the first place, as far as the opposition in Kuwait is concerned, one must understand that it is not some kind of evil, frenzied opposition that, on the whole, is on the other side of the barricades.

[Bovin] There are no barricades there.

[Shishlin] Incidentally, even before the amir returned to Kuwait, it was announced that new political reforms would be carried out in that country, precisely along the lines of greater democratization of society itself. On the whole, it is one big family. Therefore, I think that the people of Kuwait will resolve their problems.

[Bovin] Absolutely.

[Shishlin] There are very difficult economic problems.

[Bovin] It is annoying [obidno], Nikolay, that no sooner did the amir return to Kuwait than the fountain in his courtyard overflowed with good water. You understand that the waterpipes are not working and the people of Kuwait do not have anything to drink.

[Shishlin] There is now. But I think that a more substantial and more serious problem is the situation in Iraq, currently absolutely unclear. It can be said firmly and quite definitely that Iraq will not be as it was before August 1990.

[Bovin] Well, of course.

[Shishlin] That is more than obvious. Among all the problems that are to be resolved is the problem of guaranteeing a lasting security in the Gulf to ensure that there is no possibility, not a single chance, that the plunderous policy will be repeated. The second problem is to guarantee security in the subregion, that is to say, the problem of a broad Near East settlement. I want to dispute here your claims that all attempts to resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict are completely hopeless.

[Bovin] [words indistinct] Now, in the 20th century?

[Shishlin] In the 20th century, precisely in the 20th century. It is precisely now that this situation has heated up there and that everything looks new, everything is new, in a real way. A dynamic policy is required there.

[Bovin] Forgive me, but what looks new in Israel?

[Shishlin] Well, what looks new in Israel is that, I think, we are now on the threshold of the restoration of diplomatic relations between Israel and the Soviet Union.

[Bovin] Things look new in our country.

[Shishlin] But they look new in Israel, too, because, in any event, when Baker put forward the proposition of land in exchange for peace, that proposition was not rejected out of hand. There is also the relations being established between Iran and Saudi Arabia. It is well known what their relations used to be like.

[Bovin] Well, yes. Syria and America, in this sense, are working here [word indistinct] also, you see.

[Shishlin] But there is another matter. I read your article in IZVESTIYA. There are many correct arguments in it, but it seems to me that its pessimistic conclusion is not justified. There are many correct arguments as far as the need to rethink our bilateral relations with all the countries of that region, with all Arab countries. A new relationship with the countries of the Gulf is demanded of us. Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, and Bahrain are ready for that.

[Bovin] They talk about the Gulf countries in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

[Shishlin] That expression is in use. This is what I think. New ideas, new routes, new sailing directions really are needed now in order to reach a peaceful harbor. First of all, the dialogue of all with everyone is needed. Now the art of compromise is demanded.

[Bovin] You are absolutely right. 'Arafat has very greatly discredited the movement for the liberation of Palestine. They do not want to talk to it at all now, and they did not earlier either. But 'Arafat applauded when Husayn launched missiles on Israel, saying how great everything was that Husayn was doing. On the whole, there cannot be anything here now. Relations between Israel and the PLO have been exacerbated to such an extent now. It is true that there are now rumors that a session will assemble in Palestine and that there will be a change of leadership there. God alone knows if that will happen. There has not been any change in that direction. Baker arrived. They were persuaded to meet with the PLO, not with 'Arafat, but with 10 of his people on the West Bank. Tel Aviv said, excuse us, but we do not know any such 'Arafat people and we will not meet them. That is an old position of Israel's. They elect convenient representatives for themselves. So far, there are no changes. As for withdrawing from the territory is concerned, Shamir said absolutely that they would not withdraw from anywhere at all. Come on—we are ready to sit down to talk tomorrow, but without any preconditions!

It is obvious that they do not want that. They want some sort of autonomy for the Palestinians, which is their old idea, and no more than that. That is why I say, for there truly to be peace, there will need to be perhaps another couple of changes of government yet. Israel is not ready for it internally, you see. These people will not accept it, even if the Americans put pressure on them. On the other hand, when Arab states now recognize Israel, they do it through their teeth. That is also felt. These two essential features cannot be overcome in a short space of time, I do not think. Perhaps I am being pessimistic in interpreting it like that.

[Shishlin] I will agree that there are many unknown quantities now. One unknown quantity, of course, is the Palestine Liberation Organization. 'Arafat's fate is also unclear. I think that he will have to pay the price for aiding and abetting Saddam Husayn. Of course, as we have already said, Iraq is an unknown quantity. But I feel that relations between the Arab states, separately, and that same Israel will now undergo changes.

[Bovin] I hope to God that they will.

[Shishlin] They will definitely undergo changes, because Israel has earned something. It has earned political brownie points for the restrained stance it took in response to the outrageous challenge from Iraq.

[Levin] True. But on the other hand, I think Israel's policy remains just as hardline as it was. Aleksandr Yevgeniyevich has already said that they are rejecting any preconditions. I came across the following formula in one article: We will sit down at the negotiating table with the Syrians; the Syrians will say straight away, give us the Golan Heights; we will tell them: No, we will not give it to you. After that, the talks will begin.

[Bovin] The talks will begin with that. According to the idea, that is how it is supposed to be: Let's sit down, and the talks have begun. Further on we can argue with you, and somewhere along the line there will be a compromise. But I do not see anything of the sort in that statement itself.

[Levin] No, I do not see a compromise in it. I think, all the same, their position remains very hardline.

[Bovin] A compromise is the result of talks, not the beginning. Their position is hardline. That is clear.

[Shishlin] I do not know. You might dispute my point of view. Of course, assessments can differ here, but I feel that there is a very healthy element in the fact that Israel is advocating direct talks with individual Arab countries.

[Bovin] No doubt about it.

[Shishlin] I think it is simply dictated by common sense, because Israel's relations with Egypt are one thing, Israel's relations with the Gulf countries are another, and Israel's relations with Syria or with Jordan are a third. I read the following wicked, witty judgement in the American press concerning the position taken up by the king of Jordan during the Gulf war. It said that, strictly speaking, if they care so much about the Palestinian question, it is enough for King Husayn to resign and go away, leave the throne and that will be the Palestinian state, especially as a good half, if not more, of the population there are Palestinians. Everything has started moving in the Middle East, and it is not the sort of troubled water that you can go fishing in, but precisely the kind of milieu that requires dynamic political efforts and....

[Bovin, interrupting] That is why, I gather, Baker is planning to return there soon.

[Shishlin] It is Bush, in April.

[Bovin] Bush is going later on. Baker is planning to before Bush. If anything gets moving, Bush will go later. That is how I understand it.

[Levin] Of course, there are a great many aspects of the problems involved in what is already being called, most officially, the post-crisis settlement in the Near and Middle East. Interesting proposals have been put forward by the Soviet Union in this regard. But the Americans are playing a more active part in that region now.

[Bovin] That is understandable.

[Levin] Yes, it is, because the main burden of the military operations lay on their shoulders, but....

[Bovin, interrupting] Because they have a greater interest. When we talk about foreign policy, it is very important to define the interest. Say that we are doing something in the Middle East. Let's think: What is our interest? The Americans' interest is clear. It is oil, plus the security of Israel. Those are the Aremicans' two major strategic interests and the reason they put their Army of half a million there. Now for us. What is our interest in the Middle East? I ask this question.

[Shishlin] Well, answer it.

[Bovin] It is pretty hazy. Let's put it this way, in the most general form. We are interested in there simply being order, stable order there, in having nothing threatening us from there. We do not have any other concrete interest there.

[Levin] Overall, that is quite a big interest.

[Bovin] Yes, but we have the same interest, say, on the other side of our union.

[Shishlin] No, it is something else. I think that, generally speaking, there actually is serious interest here.

[Bovin] But what; what interest?

[Shishlin] I will try to answer this question now, only our interest need to be re-interpreted. What was our interest previously? Besides neopolitical interests connected with state security....

[Bovin, interrupting] Yes, this was it.

[Shishlin] This is one thing. The interest in the past was based on the fact that if the United States was concentrated there, it was necessary to stand in opposition to the United States. There was an interest in earning a little more money, all the more so as Libya paid in convertible hard currency, as did Syria.

[Bovin] For arms?

[Shishlin] Yes, for arms. Iraq, of course, was quite an exact payer for Soviet arms. Now another interest has arisen, both an economic interest and a political interest. An economic interest because these countries, without a doubt, can be our partners as far as economic cooperation is concerned. The political interest, I think, is comprised of the fact that we should concern ourselves with some kind of genuinely rich relations with Israel, taking into account the number of our citizens who have now emigrated to this country, [Bovin interjects agreement] and taking into account the interest that Israel has now shown in the enrichment and transformation of our links in the economic sphere. Israel is literally bombarding the Soviet Union with the most varied of proposals on the development of one industry or another and the development of agriculture. It must be said that Israel has quite serious and significant achievements in various branches of knowledge and in various branches of the economy. I think that we have the interest, not just as a superpower, but as a completely mundane and specific interest. For this interest to be guaranteed, we first must see that what this interest is comprised of needs to be precisely interpreted. The corresponding political, economic, and other measures need to be worked out for the interests to be implemented.

[Levin] This week there was again discussion, very active discussion, since the USSR Supreme Soviet dealt with this, on our interests in Europe as well. I have in mind the process of the ratification of the treaty on the temporary stay and subsequent withdrawal of Soviet troops from Germany and the corresponding accord signed with this treaty. The question again arose of what we are losing and what we are gaining. It turned out to be not only German policy, not only specific aspects of the withdrawal of troops and the reduction in our military presence at our vanguard boundaries advanced far to the West of the borders of the Soviet Union, but, in essence, all of the foreign policy of the perestroyka period that was being brought into question. People who are attacking the accord with Germany say that we have lost, we have ceded, we have accepted the German conditions, we have essentially capitulated. The expression—we lost the victory gained in 1945—can also be encountered.

An acute issue arises here: We should reassess the situation and we should reassess our priorities.

[Bovin] We won the war in 1945, isn't that so? But we lost the peace after 1945. This is the very essence of the issue. Spears should not be thrown at our international policies. The issue is not that we had signed a certain wrong agreement. The fact that we were not able to create a truly developed civilized society that would be on the same level as today's world in terms of economy and democracy—this is the reason for everything that has taken place in Europe. That is that. There is no need to philosophize here. We lost Europe because we have lost ourselves. We were unable to create, in every aspect, a modern, developed society. What about the regimes in Eastern Europe that, excuse me, copied the ways of our regime? They existed in such a way because we created them that way. The moment a chance came up they immediately left. Of course they would, because they were dead sick after 40 years of all this.

[Levin] They continue to leave.

[Bovin] They will continue to leave, naturally. Why? What did they get from us? We kept them by force. Now we do not have the force to do so. To change the situation now we will have to quarrel with the Americans. That is, we could have physically changed the situation by erecting, instead of the Berlin wall, a wall from the Baltics to the Adriatic. Help yourself. It would be possible to physically build such a wall. Or simply bring in tanks. All right, you bring in the tanks and...

[Levin, interrupting] But a sufficient amount of them were brought in.

[Bovin continues] ...and nobody, nobody will be able to get out. The whole of Eastern Europe and the GDR would have remained. But what does this all mean? This means a new cold war—but not actually such a cold one. This means a new exhausting round in the arms race...

[Levin, interrupting] And explosive situations in these countries.

[Bovin continues] ...and again potentially, of course, these explosive situations would be created.

[Shishlin] More than that we managed to...

[Bovin, interrupting] It is madness to speak of this.

[Shishlin continues] ...as a result of our former policies to change the countries that we got used to calling fraternal countries to becoming weights weighing down our own hands.

[Bovin] This is also right. This is also right.

[Shishlin] If we recall the past, the crushing of the Hungarian uprising threw back the policies of reform in the USSR begun by Khrushchov.

[Bovin] What about the Czech events?

[Shishlin] The same happened with the Czech events. Immediately an atmosphere of cold rapidly occurred in the country. A witch hunt was unleashed. The suppression of dissidents and those who thought otherwise began. What was the outcome of this? All the processes of a radical renewal of the Soviet society that were pressing for a long time were shelved. Of course, the starting point for the processes of renewal came at a most distressing period when everything bad, the consequences of faulty policies and a wrongly chosen course, started to work and is still working now.

[Levin] In connection with this you recalled Hungary of 1956 and Czechoslovakia. Probably it is also worth recalling Poland of 1980. And the imposition of martial law? We see the results for ourselves. In Poland, for example. Some of our comrades in positions of great responsibility say, against this background of such results: Well, martial law is a good thing. This is a solution to the economic problems. This is what is worrying me.

[Shishlin] I hope that these voices will not determine the policy of our country. We should really give thought to in light of the radical changes that have taken place in Central and Eastern Europe and the problem of our new relations with our former allies. The cooling down in our relations may be overcome to a significant extent by our active policy. After all, economic ties are being cut down in our country, political contacts are being cut down. Cultural ties have also decayed. That is not normal. That is just not normal. All the more so since Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Poland, and other countries of Central and Eastern Europe are feeling the need, even if only for those extensive economic relations with the Soviet Union. We must learn to build these relations. I do not know. I am a poor specialist as far as economics are concerned. But I think that a decision, let us say, such as that to transfer all calculations in economic links to convertible hard currency when neither we have this convertible hard currency nor our neighbors have convertible hard currency, there are only debts in convertible hard currency, I do not think that this decision is marked by a high degree of economic wisdom.

[Bovin] But what is happening in Moscow now? My Mongolian friends have come and have heard that payment for their apartment has been asked for in dollars. Where does this come from? We live in Moscow. In Mongolia they use tugriks; there are rubles here.

Where should we get dollars? I am told Moscow city soviet is now demanding dollars, so it seems we have become crazy as well. Aeroflot demands that if I have an American guest and I want to fly to the Urals with him, I must buy a ticket for him in dollars on an Aeroflot airplane; for myself in rubles, and for him in dollars. I have not known anything like it, such attitudes....

[Levin, interrupting] The visit to NATO headquarters by CSFR President Havel was an outstanding event in European politics this week. He gave a speech there that does not console the ear. He said that Czechoslovakia cannot remain neutral. He said that a security vacuum must not be created in Central and Eastern Europe. He said that these countries are striving toward NATO. It is true that on the NATO side there is very active restraint of him. They say that such steps that could be unpleasant for the Soviet Union must on no account be taken. They say they will not take that country into NATO. But what happens? I do not propose to guess how this question will be resovled. I know that the NATO members are not intending to receive either Czechoslovakia or anyone else in its ranks today. But we do not know how events will develop tomorrow. But why does Havel want this? I understand. They are afraid of us; they continue to be afraid of us. So we must work in this sphere. We need to remove this fear.

[Shishlin] For all my liking for the Czechoslovak president, I think that is a false step. I feel that he should not seek the future under the NATO roof, but under some kind of pan-European roof. It is precisely there that Czechoslovakia could play a very useful and constructive role.

[Levin] I agree with that absolutely, and the prospects are there. Even the NATO people are talking about it. But why, all the same, is Havel knocking at NATO's door today?

[Bovin] It is because he hears the talk here, in the Supreme Soviet, from people...

[Levin, interrupting] That is what I am saying.

[Bovin continues]...who say that we should perhaps take back everything that we have lost. What if something suddenly changes in our policy? What if different people suddenly come along? What will happen to Czechoslovakia then? Havel is trying here somehow to guarantee that nothing will happen to it.

[Levin] That is what it is all about, the task of removing this question and solving the problem of reconstructing relations with our neighbors in the West, our immediate neighbors, on a completely different basis depends principally on us. This task is indisputably becoming one of paramount importance. I am not certain that the appropriate attention is being paid to it.

[Shishlin] Now, when the country is in crisis, tasks for at least some kind of stabilization in the situation are coming to the fore. Then there will be movement forwards. But when we speak about tasks for stabilization, this task itself is possibe not with movement backwards but only with movement forwards. It is important, of course, to take this into consideration.

[Levin] I think that this is the main conclusion that we need to draw from our program today.

[Bovin] Stabilization with movement forward, not with movement backwards.

[Levin] With this, we say goodbye to you, respected comrade radio listeners. You were listening to the program "International Review." Taking part in it were Aleksandr Yevgeniyevich Bovin, political observer for IZVESTIYA newspaper, and political observer Nikolay Vladimirovich Shishlin and commentator Viktor Nikolayevich Levin from Moscow radio. All the best.

Union Fragmentation Scares Western Business

PM2503094591 Moscow SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA in Russian 16 Mar 91 First Edition p5

[Article by Candidate of Economic Sciences A. Mitin under the rubric "In the Opinion of the Western Businessman": "How Much Are Our Ambitions Worth in Dollars?"]

[Text] I cannot speak for anyone else, but I personally am getting the feeling that our state has come to resemble a communal apartment where the heads of families in their "diamond wedding" year have suddenly begun talking about getting divorced, dividing up their property, and starting life afresh. The whole of society is in turmoil, because first one republic then another is calling for the introduction of its own currency and the right to pursue an independent foreign policy, trade independently with the outside world, and have its own, "local" armed forces and various other things of "its own."

In the heat of the debate, we have apparently quite forgotten that the uproar in our home is being closely followed by other countries. The Europeans are particularly interested in the unhappy state of our affairs. First of all, they are not indifferent as to what the Soviet Union—a society of almost 300 million people—is going to become: a calm, stable, predictable union state or an amorphous union of selfish, proud, but poor principalities.

The pragmatic West's interest in our perestroyka is not simply vast—it is quite specific. It sees us first and foremost as a colossal market that virtually no one has taken up. Even the initial modest results of perestroyka—greater openness to the outside world and economic independence for enterprises—made thousands of Western businessmen leap to their feet. They flooded into Moscow, bringing masses of proposals to start up all kinds of ventures. Like mushrooms after rain, joint enterprises began to be set up with Western capital and hundreds of foreign trade deals made.

But then there came the "year of the horse" and the business world's enthusiasm began to wane. This year—the "year of the ram"—promises to kill off Western businessmen's enthusiasm completely. A paradoxical situation has arisen. The more we "try to improve ourselves," the less prepared the West is to do business with us. Why?

The first thing responsible in recent months for depressing Western businessmen who are doing or would like to do business with us is, according to them, the peculiar way many of our republics interpret their sovereignty. Western observers remark that, from the point of view of international legal practice, the actions of republic legislators are often incorrect, to say the least, and, in some cases, simply absurd.

One West European businessman admitted that, if this kind of law-making by republic legislators continues, he will prefer to work in some developing country. His only hope now is that common sense will prevail in the republics.

Many Western entrepreneurs interested in close business relations with us often ask whether Moscow has heard about the joint report by the IMF, the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the OECD, and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development on the situation in the Soviet Union? It is possible that some USSR and republic deputies have handled this document, which came out in December last year. But you get the impression that the overwhelming majority of them have not even heard about it. The report should be given close attention, however.

It stresses, in particular, that "whatever new political and constitutional provisions there may be in the Soviet Union, erecting barriers in the way of economic transactions would be an extremely costly venture." Consequently, the document continues, there must be "an absence of trade barriers between republics, a single monetary unit and currency exchange rate, a unified monetary-credit policy, common customs duties, and coordinated distribution of responsibilities for taxation and expenditure at various levels of government."

There is much in the Soviet Union that amazes foreigners. They are amazed, for example, by the vast number of new Soviet "businessmen," who are lacking in commercial training, business honesty, and much else that is needed to conduct civilized business deals. But they are struck—and even frightened—most of all by the determination of many "reformers" to carve up in an instant what has taken years to create and is cherished in other parts of the world: single economic space. "This is a new enigma of your soul," foreigners joke bitterly. "You do not value your fabulous natural resources in all kinds of strategic raw materials, your highly developed applied sciences, very capacious consumer market, vast areas of arable land, and colossal water resources. Seriously," they continue, "it is obvious that many Soviet legislators who travel outside the Soviet Union fail to see the most important point of all: the existence of common markets in some regions of the world and furious activity to create similar markets in others."

According to the U.S. newspaper THE CHICAGO TRIBUNE, financiers who analyze potential risk for their Western clients are almost unanimous that the boom produced by perestroyka is over. They believe that the business climate in the Soviet Union is completely ruined because of the ongoing "war of laws." According to the newspaper, one West European banker has criticized republics that want independence, because they are trying to break up the Soviet Union at the very time when Western Europe is moving in the direction of economic union.

Western observers feel that the stand taken by political forces in our country absolutizing nations' right to self-determination is particularly dangerous. They believe that this attitude leads to national isolation and exclusivity for the nation concerned, to the idea of creating "ethnically pure" states, and ultimately to racism.

When discussing Western capital, we should not take a one-sided view of its role in our economic recovery. When the West supplies us with credit, it is not only helping our reforms: It is also financing its own entrepreneurs and safeguarding its own foreign trade interests. If Germany or France, for example, supply the Soviet Union with credit, it means that their businessmen will make profits in our country. Western aid also makes geopolitical sense. In the opinion of foreign experts, without a powerful boost from the West, the USSR might face serious consequences that could damage Western and world interests.

But we would not want to belittle the usefulness of the optimum influx of Western capital for our ailing economy. It would be naive to think that we can get by without it. Our need to have the West as a partner is perhaps greater now than it has ever been before. However passionate our desire to restructure, we cannot overcome the mountain of economic difficulties on our own in a reasonable space of time. It would be extremely difficult for us to improve our economy without Western equipment, technology, credit, food, and, finally, moral support.

Meanwhile, according to Western experts, the Soviet Union's chances of attracting foreign capital are very limited. The CSFR, Hungary, and Poland get the highest rating. Let us think back to the beginning of perestroyka again. At that time, Western industrial countries were seriously considering comprehensive, large-scale financial and economic aid to the Soviet Union. But now they are wary. The explanation for their attitude is very simple: the uncertainty of who will repay the loans if the Soviet Union disintegrates.

The aforementioned joint report by four international economic organizations says that there are more obstacles in the way of improving the Soviet economy than there are in most Third World countries and that the scale of the present chaos is so great that any amount of direct aid will simply be a useless waste of resources.

Those who, while busy renewing their home, ignore well-meaning recommendations from those around them and behave in such a way that everyone willing to help perestroyka loses any desire to do so are shortsighted and even negligent.

Tomorrow is the all-Union referendum. If we say "no" to a united, whole USSR, we will be saying "no" to those business circles in the West that want to help us, and are trying to help us out of our economic crisis.

New Envoys Present Credentials to Yanayev

PM2403142591 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 21 Mar 91 Union Edition p 4

[TASS report: "Credentials Presented"]

[Text] USSR Vice President G.I. Yanayev received credentials in the Kremlin 20 March from the following ambassadors extraordinary and plenipotentiary: Bertrand Dufourcq of France, Siosaia Ma'Ulupekotofa Tuita of Tonga, and Callixte Francois Xavier D'Offay of the Seychelles.

After the presentation of credentials G.I. Yanayev held talks with the new ambassadors.

Yu.A. Kvitsinskiy, USSR deputy foreign minister, took part in the credentials presentation ceremony.

United States & Canada

Former U.S. President Nixon's Visit Reported

Sees International Experts 20 Mar

LD2003223191 Moscow TASS in English 1529 GMT 20 Mar 91

[By TASS correspondent Vladimir Suprun]

[Text] Moscow March 20 TASS—Visiting ex-President Richard Nixon met leading Soviet specialists in international relations at Moscow's Institute of the World Economy and International Relations.

Commenting on the results of the meeting, Institute Director Vladlen Martynov told TASS that a sincere exchange of views on a wide range of problems had taken place during the meeting.

Nixon and Soviet scientists discussed Soviet-American relations, the postwar settlement in the Gulf and the situation in the Middle East as a whole.

According to Martynov, Richard Nixon was briefed on the present situation in the Soviet Union, some results of, and prospects for Soviet economic and political reforms.

Nixon is expected to meet some of the Soviet top-ranking leaders, members of legislature, public and religious figures.

Nixon is also due to visit Lithuania.

Discusses Arms With Yazov 21 Mar

LD2103162191 Moscow TASS in English 1557 GMT 21 Mar 91

[By TASS correspondent Oleg Moskovskiy]

[Text] Moscow March 21 TASS—"We should focus on non-proliferation of nuclear weapons to other states and regions. This is a common point of view of the Soviet Union and the United States," Soviet Defence Minister Dmitriy Yazov told TASS.

Yazov was speaking today after his meeting with former U.S. President Richard Nixon.

According to Yazov, he and Nixon admitted that "due to efforts mainly by the Soviet Union and the United States, the cold war is over".

"We also agreed that due to detente, the Soviet Union and the United States managed to sign the Salt-2 and INF treaties. Our countries are close to the signing of a treaty on reducing strategic offensive weapons by 50 percent," Yazov said.

The sides noted a positive role the United Nations recently began to play. They agreed that it is necessary to continue efforts to strengthen the U.N. authority in the name of peace on the planet, Yazov said.

"We have also discussed reductions of conventional arms, admitting that the Soviet Union and the United States should play the main role here," Yazov said.

Chief of the Soviet Armed Forces General Staff Mikhail Moiseyev, Director of the London International Institute for Strategic Studies Robert Elsworth and director of the Soviet-U.S. relations programme of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace Dmitriy Simes attended the meeting.

Holds Talks With Yanayev

LD2103215791 Moscow TASS in English 2058 GMT 21 Mar 91

[Text] Moscow March 21 TASS—Soviet Vice-President Gennadiy Yanayev today met former U.S. President Richard Nixon, in the Soviet Union on a working visit at the invitation of the Soviet Academy of Sciences' World Economy and International Relations Institute.

They discussed a broad range of international issues and Soviet-U.S. relations.

Nixon highly assessed the level of interaction between the two states, noting its importance for the situation in the world.

The sides discussed the state of negotiating process on disarmament issues and the situation in and around the Baltics.

Yanayev spoke about the situation in the country and measures taken by the Soviet leadership to implement economic reforms, switch to market relations and steadily pursue the course of perestroyka, glasnost and democratisation, taken in 1985.

Noting a serious danger of social and inter-ethnic conflicts, Yanayev said all problems should be resolved by peaceful political means within the framework of the constitution.

Perestroyka allowed radical positive changes in Soviet-U.S. relations, currently characterised by the spirit of confidence and cooperation.

The sides agreed that it is important to retain and develop the existing potential and strengthen positive influence of the Soviet-U.S. factor on international life.

Later in the day, Nixon met member of the Soviet Security Council Yevgeny Primakov.

Sees Bessmertnykh 22 Mar

LD2203231391 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1845 GMT 22 Mar 91

[Text] Moscow, 22 Mar (TASS)—USSR Foreign Minister Aleksandr Bessmertnykh today received former U.S. President Richard Nixon who is paying a visit to the Soviet Union.

The USSR foreign minister and Richard Nixon discussed issues relating to Soviet-U.S. relations and problems that are arising in various parts of the world. Both sides noted that the new political mentality is successfully withstanding the test of durability. The Kuwaiti crisis and the way it was overcome could be cited as an example of this. Other issues of regional politics were touched on, and factors that could influence the development of relations between the USSR and the United States—whether to facilitate or block them—were also discussed.

Richard Nixon remarked upon the great role played by Soviet-U.S. relations in establishing and consolidating the new world order. He voiced the hope that the close cooperation between the USSR and the United States will continue to gain in strength in the most diverse fields to benefit both the Soviet and the American peoples, as well as the other peoples of the world.

Meets Landsbergis 23 Mar

LD2303144591 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1353 GMT 23 Mar 91

[Text] Vilnius, 23 Mar (TASS)—Former U.S. President Richard Nixon who is on a private visit to the Soviet Union, arrived in Vilnius today, ELTA reports. In the first half of the day, he spoke with Vytautas Landsbergis, chairman of the Supreme Soviet of Lithuania.

During his two-day stay in this Baltic republic, Richard Nixon will meet deputies of the Lithuanian Supreme Soviet, representatives of national minorities and left wing factions in the Lithuanian legislature.

Departs Lithuania 24 Mar

LD2403192191 Moscow TASS in English 1746 GMT 24 Mar 91

[Text] Vilnius March 24 TASS—Former U.S. President Richard Nixon, on a private tour of the Soviet Union, ended his visit to Lithuania today and left for Moscow.

Nixon visited the republic at the invitation of Lithuanian President Vytautas Landsbergis, the ELTA news agency reports.

Nixon met Lithuanian Prime Minister Gediminas Vagnorus, Lithuanian political leaders and representatives of ethnic minorities living in the republic.

PRAVDA Views Current Status of U.S. Relations

PM2403203191 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 25 Mar 91 Second Edition p 6

[Editorial commentary: "Pause Or Retreat?"]

[Text] The political crisis and then war in the Gulf were a serious test for the new relations between the USSR and the United States. By virtually unanimous consent, they passed that test.

Events in the Gulf, however, have narrowed the sphere of Soviet-U.S. cooperation and temporarily pushed into the background many important areas of joint efforts between the two countries—in the sphere of disarmament, bilateral ties, and cooperation in settling regional conflicts. Efforts in these areas are now being resumed. This was shown by the recent visit to Moscow by U.S. Secretary of State J. Baker and his meeting with USSR President M.S. Gorbachev.

Commenting on the results of the visit, newspapers have rightly been noting that the meeting was held in an atmosphere of friendly, open dialogue, and that both sides made a high assessment of the enormous progress in Soviet-U.S. relations over the past few years, and intend to develop them. At the same time, it would be wrong to overlook the fact that certain problems which have slowed joint progress also came to light. It has not so far proved possible to set a date for the next summit, which had been planned for this February but was postponed owing to the Gulf crisis. The setting of a date for it is being linked to the finalizing of certain outstanding details of the forthcoming strategic offensive arms reduction treaty. This, in turn, is being complicated by the disagreements which have emerged over the interpretation of the already signed CFE Treaty.

All these differences can only be eradicated if both sides have the political will and are ready to continue and develop Soviet-U.S. cooperation. It seems that such a willingness exists, and not only on Moscow's part. At the same time, we cannot fail to be wary of the fact that in the euphoric conditions engendered by the anti-Iraq coalition's easy victory, forces which think in old, confrontational terms are becoming more active in the United States. Speeches have been made claiming that a "unipolar" world has emerged in which the United States can act as it sees fit. There has been talk that, strictly speaking, arms control is not even necessary, since America "has no equal in terms of strength." People are trying to cast aspersions on Soviet-U.S. cooperation.

The official statements by top U.S. Administration leaders give reason to believe that they are keeping their cool and remaining true to a sense of realism. Stable and constructive relations between the USSR and the United States are too important—not only for the two countries, but for the entire world—to allow ourselves to give in to emotion and undermine their considerable foundations which have been created over the course of years.

There is nothing tragic about the fact that the summit will be held later than originally planned. Nor is there anything worrying in the fact that treaties will require further work. A pause filled with businesslike activeness by experts is entirely acceptable. But we must not permit any retreat.

Matlock Ponders Commentator's 'Cold War' Views

PM2403135591 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 23 Mar 91 Union Edition p 5

[Report by Ye. Piskunov: "Return of 'Cold War' Impossible?"]

[Text] Jack F. Matlock, U.S. ambassador to the USSR, held a briefing for Soviet journalists 21 March during which most attention was devoted to the commentary by D. Biryukov, a political observer with the USSR All-Union Television and Radio Company, broadcast on the "Vremya" program last Saturday.

In his broadcast (a video was played at the briefing) the Soviet pundit talked about the financial aid for striking Soviet miners being prepared by the AFL-CIO, comparing the situation to Poland in 1981, when the AFL-CIO gave financial help to "Solidarity." D. Biryukov also stated that staffers from the U.S. Embassy in Moscow attended the miners' congress in the Donbass and that a group of people who spoke on behalf of the Soviet miners but who had been set up by the U.S. Embassy had visited the United States. The USSR All-Union Television and Radio Company's political observer described all this as interference in the Soviet Union's internal affairs.

The U.S. ambassador assessed the broadcast as a statement reminiscent more of the "cold war" era than of the era of new thinking.

The ambassador also claimed that of late it has been possible to highlight a trend whereby people are trying to pin the failures in Soviet domestic policy and the economic disorder on foreigners. He cited statements by the chairman of the USSR KGB about espionage conducted in the Soviet Union by foreign businessmen, and the statement by the Soviet prime minister that foreign banks are undermining the Soviet economy

This trend, in the ambassador's words, distorts Americans' sincere desire to support perestroyka in the Soviet Union. J. Matlock expressed confidence that a return to the "cold war" is impossible.

As for help to Soviet miners from the U.S. trade union center—a nonstate organization—there can hardly be anything criminal about that, as J. Matlock put it. Is it a bad thing for one country's workers to help another country's?

Northeast Asia

Japanese Party Official Visits To Discuss Islands

Aims, Expectations Previewed

LD2303165691 Moscow World Service in English 1310 GMT 23 Mar 91

[Aleksey Kondratyev commentary]

[Text] The general secretary of the ruling Japanese Liberal Democratic Party, Ichiro Ozawa, will arrive in Moscow on 24 March. It seems that the preparations for an official visit to Japan by the Soviet president, Gorbachev, this April has entered its final stage. Earlier there were meetings between diplomats, representatives of business and cultural quarters of both countries. Now it is the turn of the political figures. What is Ichiro Ozawa going to discuss in Moscow? Commentary by Aleksey Kondratyev, and this is what he writes:

Today, I leafed through my file on Soviet-Japanese relations over the last six months. It follows that one problem will surely be a feature during the talks betwen President Gorbachev and the Japanese guest. The problem is the four islands of the South Kurils range. The Japanese news agency KYODO TSUSHIN points out that the General Secretary of the Liberal Democratic Party decided to visit the Soviet Union proceeding from the fact that his talks in Moscow may be of greater importance if the soviet side is ready to approach sincerely the problem of the northern territories.

The problem of the northern territories is being repeated again and again in the file. It seems that it is a 1,000-mile reef barrier, not four islands hardly noticeable on the map and that the frail boat called Soviet-Japanese relations would not overcome it riding direct, but to go round this boat is practically excluded by official Tokyo. Unfortunately it is not honored in Japanese political circles. Most political parties, including of course the ruling liberal democratic party, support the official position in general, while some of them, for example the largest opposition social Democratic Party of Japan, until recently have been demanding the return of all the Kuril Islands, and only the other day the leadership of the party, judging by everything, departed from this position and is now inclined to the problem of the return of four islands.

True, the number of politicians and businessmen is growing in Japan who are inclined to believe that it is unrealistic to demand the return of the islands as a condition for the develoment of large-scale ties with the Soviet Union. Let us, they say, expand trade and other spheres of cooperation and when the Soviet Union feels the real fruits of such cooperation then its position on the territorial dispute will become more flexible.

I admit, says our commentator, that my sympathies are with this approach. I think there is no other outcome of the stalemate situation. A compromise is needed, not an ultimatum advanced by the Japanese side. I think that the Japanese hopes that the Soviet president will bring to Tokyo a plan for transferring islands to Japan are artificially created by the purpose-oriented propaganda. Apart from other reasons Mikhail Gorbachev will hardly ignore the opinion of the Soviet public, the more so that during the recent referendum about 70 percent of the population of the disputable islands was against their transfer to Japan.

It seems that during his talks in Moscow Ichiro Ozawa will make it clear what he has in mind under the sincere approach of the Soviet side to the problem of the northern territories. Obviously both sides [word indistinct] need to take into account the current [word indistinct] and the commonsense in their attempts to find a compromise for the solution of this delicate and complex problem.

Arrives 24 Mar

LD2403061391 Moscow TASS in English 0603 GMT 24 Mar 91

[By TASS corresondent Vladimir Prokhorov]

[Text] Toyko March 24 TASS—Japan's ruling Liberal Democratic Party General Secretary Ichiro Ozawa today flew to Moscow on a visit. During his stay in the Soviet capital, Ozawa is expected to meet President Mikhail Gorbachev, Vice President Gennadiy Yanayev and Soviet Communist Party Deputy Chief Vladimir Ivashko. Talks will focus on issues of mutual interest.

After completing his visit to Moscow on March 27, Ozawa will fly to the United States. He will meet U.S. President George Bush and Secretary of State James Baker to discuss Japanese-U.S. cooperation.

Meets Gorbachev 25 Mar

LD2503100491 Moscow TASS in English 0923 GMT 25 Mar 91

[Text] Moscow March 25 TASS—President Mikhail Gorbachev and Japanese Liberal Democratic Party [LDP] leader Ichiro Ozawa began their meeting here today.

Ozawa is visiting Moscow at the invitation of the Soviet Communist Party Central Committee.

The meeting is being held on the eve of Gorbachev's visit to Japan, and, therefore, it is supposed that the sides will focus on Soviet-Japanese relations.

Since they are party leaders in their countries, it is expected that they will also discuss relations between the CPSU and the LDP.

Talks Seen as 'Useful'

OW2503145091 Tokyo KYODO in English 1426 GMT 25 Mar 91

[By Antonio Kamiya]

[Text] Moscow, March 25 KYODO—Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev on Monday proposed enlarging ties with Japan, raising hopes that Moscow may one day return four disputed islands claimed by Japan in the Northern Pacific.

Gorbachev made the offer in a nearly two-hour meeting with Ichiro Ozawa, secretary general of Japan's ruling Liberal Democratic Party [LDP], a Japanese Foreign Ministry official said.

The territorial dispute, which has strained relations between Tokyo and Moscow in the post-World War II era, is expected to emerge as the centerpiece of Gorbachev's historic visit to Japan planned for April 16-19.

Gorbachev "did not reject (Japan's) sovereignty over the islands," said Kazuhiko Togo, director of the Foreign Ministry's Soviet Affairs Division.

Togo, who was present at the meeting, would not divulge further details.

"This is all I am empowered to say now," he said.

Ozawa later described his meeting with Gorbachev as "useful," adding the Soviet leader "went beyond" what Moscow had so far said on the island issue.

Gorbachev "seems to understand the aspirations of the Japanese people," he said.

Political sources in Tokyo said Japan is ready to offer 10 billion dollars in loans and grants to the Soviet Union if Moscow recognizes Japanese sovereignty over the four disputed islands.

The four disputed islands are Iturup, Kunashir, Shikotan, and the Habomai Group, which the Soviet Union seized at the end of World War II.

The islands issue took up more than half of the one hour and 50 minutes Gorbachev and Ozawa spent together at the headquarters of the Soviet Communist Party, Togo said.

He said Gorbachev offered to expand bilateral ties and boost mutual trust as a way to resolve the islands issue.

Gorbachev "believes the most difficult issue could be resolved by building relations of trust and expanding cooperative ties," Togo said.

Moscow has hinted that it may return the two smaller islands, Shikotan and the Habomai group, to Japan in line with a promise the Soviet Union made in 1956 when the two nations resumed diplomatic relations.

The Soviet Union reneged on the promise in 1960 after Japan signed a revised security pact with the United States.

Ozawa has said Japan would accept a "phased return" of the islands once the sovereignty issue is settled.

Beyond bilateral issues, Gorbachev also told Ozawa he plans to improve relations in the Asian-Pacific region along the line of his "new thinking" diplomacy.

The Soviet leader cited the North-South issue and security concerns in the Asian-Pacific region as the major topics he plans to address during his trip to Japan next month, the first by a top Kremlin leader.

Before Gorbachev and Ozawa sat down for business, they bantered briefly about the weather, which was balmy in Moscow, and Ozawa's flight to Moscow.

"It (sunshine) was a gift from God as our country is short of energy," Gorbachev quipped.

Japanese reporters who were allowed to cover the first few minutes of the meeting said Ozawa looked tense in his first foray into top-level Japan-Soviet diplomacy.

Ozawa arrived in Moscow on Sunday at Gorbachev's personal invitation to thrash out the territorial dispute and other major issues ahead of his trip to Japan.

While expressing his gratitude for the balmy weather, Gorbachev complained about the shortage of supplies in the Soviet Union, but said "We are responsible for that."

Gorbachev was accompanied in the meeting by Valentin Falin, head of the Soviet Communist Party's International Affairs Division, and Karen Brutentz, a presidential aide.

Other members in Ozawa's team were Hiroshi Kumagai, an LDP House of Representatives member who set up the meeting for Ozawa, and Sumio Edamura, Japan's ambassador to the Soviet Union.

Apart from Gorbachev, Ozawa will meet Tuesday with Soviet Vice President Gennadiy Yanayev and Vladimir Ivashko, deputy secretary general of the Soviet Communist Party.

Ozawa will travel from Moscow to Washington on Wednesday, and meet with President George Bush and Secretary of State James Baker on Thursday.

Holds News Conference 25 Mar

OW2503141791 Tokyo NHK General Television Network in Japanese 1200 GMT 25 Mar 91

[Report on news conference by Ichiro Ozawa, secretary general of the Liberal Democratic Party, in Moscow on 25 March]

[Text] During talks held between Secretary General Ozawa of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party and President Gorbachev in Moscow, President Gorbachev made in-depth remarks about the northern territories issue. This was disclosed by Secretary General Ozawa at a news conference held just a short time ago, after the talks. In the news conference, Secretary General Ozawa told reporters that during the talks, President Gorbachev said: I quite understand the feelings of the Japanese people. I want to hold full discussions on the territorial issue. Secretary General Ozawa also told reporters: At the present stage, I have nothing to report specifically to the people. President Gorbachev's remarks were more in-depth than what I have hear previously. Although Secretary General Ozawa declined to give details of President Gorbachev's remarks at the talks, President Gorbachev is believed to have touched on the 1956 Japan-Soviet joint declaration and remarked on the issue of returning the northern territories to Japan.

President Gorbachev is believed to have studied a phased return formula under which the two islands of Habomai and Shikotan are returned to Japan when a peace treaty is concluded between Japan and the Soviet Union in line with the Japan-Soviet joint declaration, and the issue of the remaining two islands of Kunashir and Iturup will be settled after a certain period of time. Secretary General Ozawa and President Gorbachev held talks at the headquarters of the CPSU Central Committee for about two hours beginning at 1700 [0800 GMT] Japan time today. They spent more than half the time exchanging views on the northern territories issue and other bilateral issues.

During the news conference, Secretary General Ozawa said: The improvement of Japanese-Soviet relations is not simply a bilateral issue, but something conducive to achieving world peace and stability. As to what we must do at the moment, I want to make the Soviet Union recognize Japan's sovereignty over the four islands of Habomai, Shikotan, Kunashir and Iturup. This is the genuine feeling of the Japanese people, and I hope the president will understand these feelings. Thus, Secretary General Ozawa pressed President Gorbachev for a political decision to drastically improve Japanese-Soviet relations after resolving the territorial issue through Soviet recognition of Japan's sovereignty over the four northern islands.

In response, President Gorbachev said: There are two ways to improve Japanese-Soviet relations. One way is to press each other's demands, and the other way is to raise relations to a new level by expanding ties between the two countries and strengthening mutual confidence. Regarding remarks by Secretary General Ozawa, I think that various discussions should be held to resolve issues in the course of expanding relations and strengthening confidence between the two countries, and I am ready to hold talks on various issues.

A Japanese official who attended the talks said: I believe President Gorbachev fully understood the views of the

Japanese side on the territorial issue. Today's talks will undoubtedly lead to future talks between Japan and the Soviet Union.

This was the result of the Ozawa-Gorbachev talks based on remarks by Secretary General Ozawa at the news conference.

Sakhalin Official on Japanese Kurils Claim

OW2203111091 Tokyo KYODO in English 1045 GMT 22 Mar 91

[Text] Tokyo, March 22 (KYODO)—A senior official of the Soviet Far East island of Sakhalin has acknowledged that Japan has residual sovereignty over four Soviet-held northern islands off Hokkaido, the leader of a ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) mission said Friday.

LDP Deputy Secretary General Koko Sato told reporters that A. P. Aksymouv, head of the Sakhalin People's Assembly, agreed privately and virtually in public that Japan has sovereignty of the four islands.

Sato, leader of the four-member delegation to Sakhalin, quoted Aksymov as saying he and his family accept the Japanese claim.

The Soviet Union has occupied Iturup, Kunashir, Shikotan, and Habomai islet group for more than 40 years since seizing them at the end of World War II.

During a meeting with Sakhalin officials on Thursday, Sato proposed a phased return to Japan of the four islands, showing a major departure from Tokyo's decades-long call for an en bloc reversion.

The territorial dispute is widely reported to be the focus of summit talks between Japanese Prime Minister Toshiki Kaifu and Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev in Tokyo in mid-April. Gorbachev is due to visit Japan on April 16-19, becoming the first Kremlin leader to do so.

Former Japanese Leader Advocates Aid to USSR

PM2203154191 Moscow SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA in Russian 22 Mar 91 First Edition p 5

[Report by V. Solntsev: "In Japan's Interests To Give the USSR Aid; Tadao Morimoto's Prescriptions"]

[Text] Giving financial aid to the Soviet Union would accord with the interests of Japan, for which it would be important to conclude a bilateral long-term agreement on economic cooperation during USSR President Mikhail Gorbachev's visit due in April.

A TASS correspondent reports from Tokyo that former President Tadao Morimoto, one of the leading Japanese specialists on the Soviet Union, said this in a KYODO news agency interview.

Assessing the economic situation in the USSR, the Japanese expert, who has visited the Soviet Union 71 times over the past 30-odd years and is very far from harboring illusions, pointed out that the USSR's attempts to switch to a market economy have not yet resulted in substantial progress.

In T. Morimoto's opinion, the chief cause of the present situation is the discrepancy between the quantity of goods and the mass of money. The surplus, including money which Soviet people keep directly at home, reaches 220 billion rubles—which amounts to almost one-fourth of the country's gross national product. "Serious inflation," he pointed out, "can begin in any country if the government forcibly introduces a market economy and a liberalization of prices at a time when there is a shortage of goods, as happened in Poland. The situation in the Soviet Union is exacerbated by the fact that the food shortage and inflation are happening simultaneously. It is no wonder that Soviet people are so critical of their government." In the Japanese expert's opinion, the most effective way out of the present situation would be provided by realizing the proposals contained in the report prepared last December by four international financial organizations, which advocated, in particular, a substantial reduction in the state budget and the absorption of the surplus mass of money by means of selling state property.

Near East & South Asia

Commentaries, Reports View Postwar Developments

UN Assesses Peace Plan

LD2103190291 Moscow International Service in Arabic 1600 GMT 21 Mar 91

[Aleksey Zlaturunskiy commentary]

[Excerpt] The permanent members of the UN Security Council were briefed yesterday on a draft resolution on a permanent cease-fire in the Gulf region. It was drafted by the United States on the basis of consultations held by President Bush, as reported by THE NEW YORK TIMES, with a number of European leaders and on the basis of the talks held by Secretary of State Baker recently in the Soviet Union and a number of Near and Middle Eastern countries. The draft resolution was sent to the capitals of the UN Security Council permanent member countries. It is expected that it would be discussed in the next few days at the UN Security Council's public sessions.

Aleksey Zlatorunskiy writes: First of all, I would like to stress the importance of this positive matter. The United Nations is again becoming a center of endeavors for establishing just and lasting peace in the Gulf region. This is particularly important now since the military operations have ended and UN Resolution 678, which granted the international coalition the right to use force to stop the Iraqi aggression, has been implemented.

The issue in question now is the postwar arrangement in that large and economically and strategically important region, particularly since the emergence recently of signs indicating the desire by some members of the international coalition to exploit the situation which has emerged in Iraq to achieve their own objectives, some of which are very close to interference in Iraq's internal affairs, and they have nothing to do with the Security Council resolutions.

It may be assumed that the draft resolution proposed by Washington will raise varying reaction. For example, it only proposes the partial lifting of the economic sanctions against Iraq, while many countries, such as France and some other EC countries, want the complete abolition of the economic embargo. The U.S. draft resolution demands that Iraq must destroy completely its stockpile of chemical and biological weapons. This may sound logical at first, because Baghdad was the aggressor, but would this measure become effective if similar mass destruction weapons are not destroyed in other countries, too? How can we talk about the disarming of an Arab country while its neighbors are being armed? I do not believe that this would lead to lasting peace. It would most probably lead only to the redistribution of the armament centers, and the threat of new armed conflicts breaking out would not be unlikely.

It is not a coincidence that the current president of the EC ministerial council, in his talks with James Baker, proposed on behalf of Western Europe the signing of an international agreement to monitor armament and disarmament in the Near and Middle East, providing that the monitoring would be compulsory and equally applicable to everyone to avert the emergence of a situation in which it would be possible for a country, such as Israel, for example, to become literally planted with modern weapons, including mass destruction weapons, while its neighbors would be forcefully disarmed. [passage omitted]

Commentators Debate Issues

LD2203192191 Moscow All-Union Radio Second Program Radio-2 Network in Russian 1130 GMT 22 Mar 91

[Discussion between commentators Gubernatorov and Igor Surguchev]

[Excerpts] [Gubernatorov] Greetings, esteemed comrades. Our mailbag continues to contain many letters which touch upon the war in the Persian Gulf, which has now ended, and the Kuwait crisis, which gave rise to it. This is undoubtedly an acute and burning theme which gives rise to varied judgments and opinions. The majority of letters is, alas, uniform in content and in the emotions inspiring their writers. These are: condemnation of the war in the Persian Gulf zone; solidarity with Iraq; and criticism of the position of the USSR, which was on the side of the anti-Iraq multinational coalition. I do not intend to list all the writers of such letters. I will just name a few. [passage omitted]

They and other listeners who share their opinions consider that the war of the multinational forces against Iraq was imperialist aggression. They assert that it was inhuman, barbarous, and so on. Many sharply critical remarks are addressed to our president and government because they, allegedly, are under the thumb of the United States and, as Comrade (Kharitonov), from Cheboksary, puts it, abandoned Iraq to be torn to pieces. This is, of course, not a new thesis, but it seems to be that there is a subject for discussion. In this regard, I have invited to the microphone my colleague, Igor Surguchov.

[Surguchov] I have already, on several occasions, had to reply to letters devoted to the Persian Gulf crisis and, you know, I get the impression that it is mainly supporters—and I would even say admirers—of Iraqi President Saddam Husayn who write to us. I conclude that this category of our listeners is simply not prepared for a serious, well argued discussion of the reasons for the crisis, its nature, the motives for the actions of the Iraqi leadership, on the one hand, and of the majority of the world community and the anti-Iraq coalition, on the other. These people do not wish to accept facts and conclusions which contradict their convictions. Unfortunately, one is aware of their unwillingness to look objectively into the complicated situation and their striving to proclaim their own position, their own truths.

[Gubernatorov] It seems to me that they have more emotion than arguments. [passage omitted]

[Surguchev] To tell the truth, I cannot understand why condemnation of the United States for its previous sins should serve to excuse the criminal actions of the Baghdad regime. But, from the logic of some of our listeners, it would appear that the United States is bad and Baghdad is good only because it opposed it. [passage omitted]

In response to Saddam Husayn's stubborn ignoring of the United Nation's will, the Security Council adopted a resolution sanctioning the use of force against Iraq. The USSR supported all of these measures not at all to please the United States but on the basis of a feeling of justice, in the interests of the triumph of international law and the liberation of Kuwait from foreign occupation. Would it have been good if we had not done this? It is not the USSR—to use the expression of Comrade (Kharitonov), from Cheboksary—which abandoned Iraq to be torn to pieces but Saddam Husayn by refusing to implement the UN resolutions in good time. All the victims and sufferings which the war brought the Iraqi peole are completely on the conscience of the Iraqi president and his entourage. As the saying goes: You cannot help someone who will not help himself.

[Gubernatorov] What do you think of the assertions—and they appear quite frequently in letters from our listeners—that the multinational forces headed by the United States conducted an unjust and inhuman war against Iraq?

[Surguchev] I think that this was one of the rare, just wars, totally just. [passage omitted]

In general, I think that the reasons why many of our citizens hold a negative attitude to the halting of Iraqi aggression and to the position of our government on this question lie in the anti-Americanism which has been imbued in us since childhood. [passage omitted]

The past should not hide the present, all the more so since, in recent years, vast changes have taken place in the world, and Washington's policy is also changing. Let us judge it by specific facts and events and not on the basis of convictions which arose in the past that the United States is an aggressor, an imperialist power, or international gendarme. [passage omitted]

As I have said, the United States' position is changing, and there are grounds to suppose that the changes will also affect its approaches to the problem of the Middle East.

Regional 'Conundrums' Viewed

PM2503110391 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 23 Mar 91 Second Edition p 6

[Report by Yuriy Glukhov "View from Moscow": "Near East Conundrums"]

[Text] The "Desert Storm" has subsided. Iraq, which encroached on its neighbor's sovereignty and lands, has been laid low. Kuwait has been liberated. The crisis in the Persian Gulf zone is approaching its logical conclusion. Once again the chronic unresolved problems of the region are making themselves felt still more acutely. What will be the fate of the Palestinians—an outcast people? There are 5 million of them—several times more than there are Kuwaitis. What is the future of the Arab lands occupied by Israel? Will Lebanon attain peace and national concord? Finally, will the vicious circle of violence in the Near East be broken?

The flames of Arab-Israeli wars have blazed there five times over the past four decades, and the state of enmity remains permanent. This is precisely why it is becoming extremely urgent to resolve these conundrums today. The point is that the success of the international community's joint actions against Iraq's aggressive encroachments has given rise to a certain optimism and hope. In addition, the search for solutions has resumed. The recent trip to the Near East by U.S. Secretary of State J. Baker and the visit which U.S. President G. Bush is planning there are associated with this. In addition, as White House Press Secretary M. Fitzwater declared, "confidence in the United States is greater than ever before as regards its ability to act as a catalyst in the peace process."

In this connection some of our readers have written to express the opinion that the radical approach demonstrated in the Persian Gulf zone can and must be utilized by Washington in fulfilling UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338. As is known, the United States recognizes them as the basis of a Near East settlement. These resolutions demand, in particular, the withdrawal of Israeli Armed Forces from the territories occupied in June 1967, i.e. the liberation of the West Bank of the Jordan, East Jerusalem, the Gaza Strip, and the Golan Heights. (The Sinai peninsula was released by Israel under the Camp David agreements with Egypt).

But let us not indulge in conjecture. The West's attitudes to Iraq's occupation of Kuwait and Israel's occupation of Arab lands are different and, at times, tendentious, as are, for example, its attitudes to the dramatic events in Lithuania within the framework of the "imperial" Union and to the daily bloodshed in South Ossetia under the protection of "democratic" Georgia. They examine one through a magnifying glass and look at the other through their fingers.

As regards operation "Desert Storm," in my view it cannot set a standard at all. The use of force is not a method of resolving conflicts, still less if you are guided by the new political thinking and humanist principles. Such a method must be ruled out. In respect of not only Israel but also the Arabs. I mention this because there is an increased temptation to try to impose a strong-arm settlement on the Arab countries.

The underlying reason for such aspirations is no secret. The Arab world has been weakened and split. Iraq—one of the strongest members of the anti-Israel coalition—has been smashed. The Palestinians have been demoralized, deprived of material support, and isolated. Considerable material and economic damage has been caused to Arab countries. Israel, on the other hand, has virtually secured a triple gain. Its sworn enemy has been put out of commission. The Israeli Army is continuing to be upgraded with the latest weapons. Israel's prudent refusal to be drawn into the war against Iraq has paid big moral and political dividends.

In the present situation some people in the United States are not above asking the Arabs to pay the check and are not even very fastidious in their choice of words. Charles Krauthammer, for example, writes in THE WASHINGTON POST: "The Saudis and Kuwaitis could show us their gratitude for saving their skins by taking one or two steps toward reconciliation with Israel." The same topic is aired in David Brinkley's questions to U.S. Secretary of State J. Baker: "Saudi Arabia is obliged to the United States for ensuring its defense. Kuwait is obliged to the United States for its existence."

I believe that such statements must grate on the Arabs. Particularly as the U.S. aid is not coming free. It has to be paid for, notably by the Arabs. It is costing Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and the United Arab Emirates billions to maintain the U.S. soldiers. In addition, what the

Americans were defending not least during the operation was their own oil and strategic interests. Finally, the demands for payment and the attempts at diktat could nullify the noble mission to restore peace, sovereignty, and international law to which the international community gave the "go-ahead."

Because it is precisely these principles, in the final analysis, that must triumph in the Near East. It is possible to note as a positive contribution the U.S. confirmation of its support for UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 and for the thesis of "land for peace" and its confirmed refusal to recognize the annexation and assimilation of Arab lands. Israeli Prime Minister Y. Shamir has already addressed three "noes" to Washington. "No" to the Palestinian delegation with which U.S. Secretary of State J. Baker met; "no" to withdrawal from the Golan Heights; and "no" to stopping the construction of settlements in the occupied territories.

In addition to the good intentions, paradoxical though it may seem, U.S. policy largely continues to remain a "catalyst" of negative processes in the Near East. Tel Aviv's tough stand is nurtured to a certain degree by Washington, by its negative attitude to talks with the PLO and the creation of a Palestinian state, and by its constant playing up to Israel.

Another cause for concern is the new twist given to the arms race at a time when, you might think, a period of detente ought to ensue in the region. Addressing Congress, U.S. Defense Secretary R. Cheney declared that "the defense of U.S. allies in the Near East is a higher-priority task" for the United States than an embargo on deliveries of sophisticated arms to the region following the end of the war in the Persian Gulf region. He maintained that the United States could not leave such "strategic allies" as Israel "defenseless."

The Pentagon's desire to consolidate its hold on the region defies logical explanation. For what purpose? The situation in Southwest Asia has been defused. Iraq's military potential has been eliminated. Iran emerged drastically weakened from the recent war. There is not even any reason to speculate over the notorious "Soviet threat." It is now two years since the Soviet troops left Afghanistan. A high level of confidence has been achieved in Soviet-U.S. relations. The United States essentially has no enemies in the region. Or is it maintaining a military presence in the reckoning that there will be a repeat of Arab-Arab internecine strife? But then the United States risks being drawn into internal affairs and fulfilling exclusively gendarme functions.

Incidentally, the continued presence of U.S. troops in the region already entails that risk. THE NEW YORK TIMES wrote in an editorial titled "Iraq's Shifting Sands": "Why prolong the allied occupation of Iraq? The declared reason boils down to the fact that Saddam Husayn has not yet fulfilled the allies' terms for a permanent cease-fire. The undeclared reason is that, by controlling 15 percent of Iraqi territory, President Bush and his coalition partners can help to overthrow the Iraqi leader. But, at the same time, the occupation lays the allied troops open to the colossal risk of being drawn into a civil war in Iraq, with additional bloodshed on all sides and without guarantees of a favorable outcome."

It seems that the situation in the Near and Middle East could once again return to its former state, to endless confrontation. The conundrums of Near East problems are not getting any easier. The path to peace and a settlement is incompatible with the arms race and a one-sided approach. It entails movement toward each other. By both Israel and the Arab countries. Without detriment to either side. Real opportunities for a peaceful solution really do exist now. The peoples of the region are suffering from shock, having found themselves on the brink of the abyss and endured the horror of a military and ecological disaster. They do not want a repeat of the tragedy.

Groups Send Humanitarian Aid to Kuwait, Iraq

LD2303045391 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1455 GMT 22 Mar 91

[Text] Moscow, 22 Mar (TASS)—In connection with the catastrophic consequences of the war in the Persian Gulf zone, the Soviet Peace Fund, the Soviet Afro-Asian Solidarity Committee, and the USSR Union of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies have allocated 295,000 rubles for humanitarian assistance to the populations of Iraq and Kuwait. The aid (medical supplies, first aid sets, dressing materials and blankets) is being sent by Aeroflot aircraft to Tehran with subsequent guaranteed delivery and distribution through the channels of the International Red Cross.

Analyst Examines Recent Afghan Developments

LD2203225391 Moscow TASS in English 1713 GMT 22 Mar 91

[By TASS political news analyst Yuriy Tyssovskiy]

[Text] Moscow March 22 TASS—In a message to the people on the occasion of the new year holiday Nowruz, Afghan President Najibullah emphasised that important pre-conditions are being formed in the war-torn country for the advancement to the long-awaited peace.

Noteworthy is a new constructive initiative in this direction by the Afghan leadership. Najibullah proposed proclaiming one of the provinces that suffered most during the war a peace zone where all warring parties will be allowed political, economic and cultural activity and where elections to bodies of popular government will be held subsequently.

In the run-up to the Moslem holiday of Ramadan, Kabul also proposed a ceasefire to the armed opposition groups. The proposal was rejected outright. Moreover, exactly at this time the die-hard opposition launched a large-scale offensive on Khowst, Paktia province, which is located 20 kilometers from the border with Pakistan. Pakistani army units equipped with heavy weapons appeared to be involved in the action.

Simultaneously, a mass concentration of troops and military hardware, including aviation, is under way in the cities of Kohat and Tal, which is confirmed by Western mass media reports as well. According to military specialists' estimates, such actions represent a threatening gesture, Reuter reports.

Islamabad officials deemed it necessary to dissociate themselves from these actions, alleging that Pakistan does not have either military units or even individuals on Afghan territory.

This statement needs to be called in question, however. Over the years of my work in Afghanistan, I spoke to at least a dozen Pakistani agents who were smuggled into Qandahar, Nangarhar, Khowst and were subsequently captured by the Afghan security service. Each time, Pakistan "refuted" the detainees' involvement in the inter-departmental army intelligence service, although evidence was irrefutable.

Two years of the independent defence of the homeland, during which the opposition failed to achieve substantial success, did not sober down the Peshawar ringleaders of the opposition and their Pakistani patrons. This obvious fact cannot avoid casting gloom over Afghans' festive sentiments. The self-same calls for jihad, the bellicose rhetoric towards the "Kabul regime", which is shored up from time to time by senseless armed raids, and continued bloodshed.

Last autumn, the assembly of field commanders announced the integration of forces to launch an all-out offensive on all big cities of Afghanistan. But it is common knowledge that the 30,000-strong force of rebels failed to break the will of Jalalabad's defenders in the spring of 1989 and their attempts to seize Khowst have been unsuccessful for 12 years.

By the way, the rebels' latest attempt to take Khowst appeared to be in vain as well.

Prospects for the Afghan people remain rather gloomy. Despite successes by the National Reconciliation policy, the situation in several areas of the country continues to remain serious.

Pakistan has not abandoned attempts to force its Afghan agents to launch a regular spring campaign of military actions. Its outcome is clear: despite financial injections and supplies of new batches of weapons, it will be a flop again. But in Islamabad they do not think about the cost of this campaign to the Afghan people, about economic losses, the grief and suffering of ordinary people. They are ready to fight up to the last Afghan.

East Europe

Slovak Premier Visits, To Discuss Economic Ties

Meets With USSR's Pavlov

LD1403095991 Prague Domestic Service in Czech 0930 GMT 14 Mar 91

[Text] In the Soviet Union, Slovak Prime Minister Vladimir Meciar has started talks this morning with Valentin Pavlov, chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers. On the agenda are questions of mutual economic cooperation, in particular, problems of reciprocal trade. In opening the meeting, Valentin Pavlov said that the Soviet Union is ready for the talks. Vladimir Meciar recalled long-standing friendly relations between the Slovak Republic and the Soviet Union and noted that the banners of the Slovak Republic and the Soviet Union and noted that the banners of the Slovak Republic and the Russian Federation are indentical.

Joint Commercial Bank Planned

LD1503095191 Prague CTK in English 2221 GMT 14 Mar 91

[By unidentified CTK correspondent]

[Text] Moscow March 14 (CTK)—Slovak Premier Vladimir Meciar agreed here today with his Soviet and Russian counterparts Valentin Pavlov and Ivan Silayev respectively that a Russian-Slovak commercial bank will be founded in Bratislava within a month.

Meciar told newsmen that Soviet oil supplies were the first problem to have been successfully settled during his talks in Moscow. The negotiations on this issue continue but it seems the volume of oil demanded by Czechoslovakia will be supplied, he said.

All proposals for exchanges of goods worth several thousand million crowns, which have been suspended so far, will be specified by the Russian side within a month, he said. In his opinion, what was good in mutual relations should be preserved and developed.

Also discussed were issues linked with the development of the federation in these two countries as well as the political situation in Czechoslovakia, Meciar said, and added that under discussion with his Russian counterpart were also issues on removing obstacles which impede the development of direct contacts between Slovakia and the Russian Federation.

The Slovak premier, who arrived here today from Italy, ended his stay in the Soviet capital and left for Kiev, the capital of the Ukraine.

Commenting on the situation in Slovakia before leaving Moscow for Kiev, Slovak Premier Vladimir Meciar said that allegations about a coup in Slovakia were just imagination. Analyses of political processes in Slovakia show they are not aimed at the destruction of Czechoslovakia, he said. He said: "Slovakia must constitute itself as a sovereign state because a sovereign state can then pass over part of its sovereignty to the federation."

He further stated that many Czech politicians have undue reactions to developments in Slovakia, some can be described as hysterical. These reactions work against the development of cooperation, he said.

He pointed out that confidence must be built on understanding and not on assumptions that what happens in Slovakia is suspicious while if the same thing happens in the Czech republic it is correct.

Asked about the possible international legal implications of Czechoslovakia's disintegration, Meciar said the solution to this questions remains exclusively an affair of the Czechs and Slovaks.

Holds News Briefing

LD1403225391 Moscow World Service in English 2110 GMT 14 Mar 91

[Text] At Moscow's Sheremetyevo Airport, there has been a news conference of Soviet and foreign journalists following the negotiations Vladimir Meciar, chairman of the Slovak Republic's government, had in the Soviet Union. The Slovak leader is in this country on an official visit. This is what he said about the results of the talks:

Vladimir Meciar said that he was very satisfied with the results. The relations between Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union have reached a certain point where new inspiration and ideas must be looked for. The previous forms of cooperation have been exhausted and new ones have not been found so far. For instance, the prime minister of the Slovak Republic recalled that barter exchanges of goods had stopped and there were no more transactions using the ruble equivalent. The exchange rate of the two countries currencies have not yet been settled. At the same time, we have shifted to trade in world prices for dollars. Both countries still lack hard currency. The Slovak prime minister hopes that the negotiations have found new mechanisms and principles of trade. The Soviet Union had displayed understanding of our problems and wants to cooperate with the Czechoslovak Federation and with the Czechia [as heard] and Slovakia individually, Vladimir Meciar said. The suspension of efforts to foster the division of labor between the two countries has been no good for either Czechoslovakia or the Soviet Union. This means that traditional cooperation must be maintained and new forms of found.

It was agreed to set up a Russian-Slovak commercial bank in Bratislava. One of the functions of the bank will be to facilitate commodity transactions with the use of national currencies. Some opportunities for cooperation at the level of certain agencies were also explored. Three work groups of various industries have been formed in Moscow.

Vladimir Meciar spoke highly of his talks with the Prime Minister of the Russian Federation, Ivan Silayev. It was agreed that the governments of the Slovak Republic and the Russian Federation would sign a long-term treaty for cooperation within one month.

In conclusion the Prime Minister of the Slovak Republic, Vladimir Meciar, said that he was very pleased about the results of his visit.

Bessmertnykh, Romanian Counterpart Discuss Talks

LD2203155391 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1409 GMT 22 Mar 91

[By TASS diplomatic correspondents Sergey Ryabikin and Leonid Timofeyev]

[Text] Moscow, 22 Mar (TASS)—"The meeting with Romania's foreign minister, which touched on the basic problems of our interrelations and the most burning topics of international politics, passed in a friendly atmosphere and was intensive, specific, and businesslike," said USSR Foreign Minister Aleksandr Bessmertnykh in a conversation with journalists at the end of his talks today with his Romanian counterpart Adrian Nastase.

According to the Soviet minister, during the talks coincidence in views on leading international problems, including on the development of the European process and on questions of bilateral relations, such as the further broadening of political dialogue, was noted.

Describing the treaty of cooperation, good-neighborliness, and friendship between the USSR and Romania that was initialled today, Aleksandr Bessmertnykh stated that this document "will be the new legal basis" of interrelations between the two countries. He believes that "it is, at the same time, a precedent for such treaties, that can also be concluded with other countries of Eastern Europe."

Replying to a question by the TASS diplomatic correspondent, the USSR foreign minister reported that the signing of the treaty will take place during the coming visit to the USSR by Romania's President Ion Iliescu. "We expect this to take place very soon," he stated.

"The USSR should build renewed relations, freed of everything alien [nanosnoye] and artificial," Aleksandr Bessmertnykh noted. "The Romanian foreign minister's visit is a practical demonstration of such a line."

Adrian Nastase, for his part, highly assessed the results of the talks that took place in Moscow which, in his view, "assisted the further improvement and development of Soviet-Romanian relations. The initialed treaty, he continued, "opens up a new framework of good-neighborliness, which must reflect geographic location and at the same time also satisfy economic necessity." "I would stress that from the moment this document takes effect, the treaty based on an ideology that no longer exists for us will cease to apply," the head of Romania's foreign policy department said.

After completing the talks in Moscow today Adrian Nastase will depart on a tour of the country. He will visit the Ukraine and Moldova, where meetings with the foreign ministers and other leaders of these republics will take place.

Romanian Opposition Protests 'Undemocratic' Laws

PM2203152591 Moscow SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA in Russian 22 Mar 91 First Edition p 5

[Unattributed report: "Bucharest: On Brink of Explosion"]

[Text] The Romanian Government's decision to begin the second stage of price liberalization 1 April has caused not only unrest among the population but also a tough reaction from the opposition. The "Appeal to the Nation," which a spokesman for the "Convention for the Establishment of Democracy in Romania" delivered on television Wednesday evening, points out that the country is in a profound political, economic, social, ecological, and moral crisis.

The authors of the appeal, which was signed by the leaders of the five major opposition parties in Romania belonging to the convention, believe that the authorities are supporting calls for violence and chauvinism for the purpose of diverting the public from the real problems. Persecution of demonstrators and the charge against them of seeking to carry out a coup d'etat in the country have caused people to lose faith in a better future and provoked mass emigration, particularly among young people, the document points out.

After emphasizing that the democratic principles of the division of power are being systematically violated in Romania, the convention spokesman accused the country's leadership of using illicit methods in the struggle against the opposition and against unwelcome mass media, preserving old structures, and adopting undemocratic laws.

Talks on Troop Pullout From Poland Continue

Questions Remain

LD2203151891 Moscow World Service in English 1210 GMT 22 Mar 91

[Vadim Solovyev commentary]

[Text] The fifth round of talks between Soviet and Polish military representatives has ended in Moscow. A transit of the Soviet troops leaving Germany and a withdrawal of the Soviet military units from Poland have been discussed. Here is a commentary by our military observer, Vadim Solovyev:

It was expected that if not all the questions at least a considerable number of them would be resolved at the present stage of negotiations on a Soviet withdrawal from Poland. The chief of staff of the Soviet Armed Forces announced before the dialogue in Moscow that it was possible to start withdrawing Soviet troops from Poland already in April or May this year on condition that the Polish authorities stopped hindering the transit of the Soviet military contingent stationed in Germany.

He also said that the Soviet military command intended to remove the western direction headquarters from the Polish territory and suggested that one-fifth of the Soviet troops in Poland return home by the end of the year. It was planned to make a complete withdrawal within three years, and there were reasons to believe that the Polish side would come out with fresh proposals. Unfortunately, many questions have remained unsolved.

The [first] deputy chief of staff of the Soviet Armed Forces, Colonel General Anatoliy Kleymenov, who took part in the talks, said almost [all] the political questions were settled, yet we failed to come to an agreement as to how the transit of Soviet troops from Germany through Polish territory should be paid for. This question as well as another concerning the status of the Soviet military presence in Poland are to be discussed during the next round of talks.

It looks like the issue of the Soviet military withdrawal from Poland is likely to be discussed during the coming visit of the Polish President Lech Walesa to the Soviet Union.

Progress Seen on 'Transit' Issue

PM2503154791 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 22 Mar 91 First Edition p 3

[Article by Lieutenant Colonel V. Nikanorov: "Problems Remain"]

[Text] The fifth round of Soviet-Polish talks on the terms of the Soviet troops' presence in and withdraw from the Polish Republic and on the transit across across Polish territory of the Western group of forces that is being withdrawn from Germany has ended in Moscow.

These talks, in which representatives of relevant departments from the two countries are participating, have been alternating between the Polish and Soviet capitals since November last year. The previous four rounds brought no noticeable success. The Polish side made some very rigid demands regarding the schedule for the withdrawal of the Northern Group of Forces—before the end of this year—which is unacceptable to the Soviet side. The payment requested for the transport by Polish rail and road of the Soviet combat hardware and troops leaving Germany was also inordinately high, in our opinion.

How did the two-day fifth round of talks end? In its participants' opinion, it achieved definite progress, mainly on questions relating to a problem unconnected with the withdrawal of the Northern Group of Forces.

This was the transit question. There was quite a lot of confrontation on this question at previous rounds. To be honest, the Soviet side did not fully understand the position of the Polish side, which seemed to have done its best to hinder transit. This is all the more bizarre considering that Polish railways, according to press reports, are currently working to only 40 percent capacity. Our loads dispatched from Germany could provide many people in Poland with work, which is a very current issue at the moment given the increasing unemployment in the country. Nevertheless, the conditions, sprouting like mushrooms after the rain and effectively impeding transit, make one think that perhaps transit across Polish territory should be abandoned entirely? Perhaps, too, there is a good case to be made for organizing shipments via other countries or by sea? Especially since calculations show that this may be more advantageous to us economically.

Nevertheless, at the moment the sides have agreed that there will be no road transit across Polish territory—only rail and air. The other problems under discussion at the talks still await solution.

"This was a working round," V. Kopteltsev, head of the Soviet delegation, noted. "It must be said that the recent talks between Army General M.A. Moiseyev, chief of the USSR Armed Forces General Staff, and Polish leaders in Warsaw helped achieve progress on certain important questions. Now the sides have managed to move on to a discussion of the details. It is understandable that a whole series of new contradictions not previously discussed would arise in this process. But they are of a different scale and order of magnitude compared with the difficulties encountered previously, that is, they are quite surmountable. Army Gen. Moiseyev stated unambiguously in Warsaw that the withdrawal of troops from Polish territory will begin in the near future. The Polish side was convinced that we are not clinging to Polish soil for the sake of it, "out of principle," as it were, we firmly intend to withdraw our troops. Army Gen. Moiseyev clearly explained that our new defensive concept is based on the premise that it is necessary to defend oneself on one's own territory and relying on one's own people without trying to protect or defend other people's borders when that country's people have not asked one to. I believe that the Polish side understood our position here. If there was distrust regarding the Soviet intentions on the fate of the Northern Group of Forces, I believe that they have now been dispelled.

Thus the fifth round of talks has ended. It was a step forward, albeit a small one. The painstaking work to resolve the complex range of problems goes on.

Political Scientist Views East Europe Ties

LD2403104991 Budapest Domestic Service in Hungarian 0730 GMT 24 Mar 91

[Interview with Nikolay Shishlin, "political scientists who works in the CPSU Central Committee, by correspondent Gabor Izbeki, place and date not given; from the "World Clock" program—recorded; Shishlin speaks in Russian with superimposed Hungarian translation]

[Excerpts] Once Hungarian-Soviet relations were ever so cloudless. These days storms and torrential rains alternate. The tension is signaled often by a PRAVDA article or TASS commentary. It is not only the thinking in terms of empire which is given space and voice, however. The view of Nikolay Shishlin, the political scientist who works in the CPSU Central Committee, as told to Gabor Izbeki is completely different for example.

[Izbeki] Since the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact and the yet again unsuccessful attempt to reshape the CEMA there have been as many as two large articles in the Soviet press dealing with the Soviet Union's East European policy. Valeriy Musatov, an associate of the CPSU Central Committee, has especially urged Moscow to become more active in this region lest a cordon sanitaire be erected along the Soviet Union's western borders. Is this fear justified in your view?

[Shishlin] First, I would like to stress that both the tranformation of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union are far from having been completed. Naturally, [this] is slowing down and further complicates the establishment of new types of relations between the Soviet Union and the former allies. At the same time, these countries remain very close neighbors and I do not believe that some kind of dramatic break will occur in our relations.

It is another matter when we are told that we must place all relationships, from the viewpoint of principles, on new foundations. In this regard both excessive haste and delay are dangerous.

[Izbeki] Nikolay Vladimirovich, I think that it is the delay which is characteristic of most cases perhaps; both in Moscow and in the East European capitals they were waiting for the other to at last start something. Thus even personal relations have been reduced to a minimum. Moscow has been dealing primarily with the big countries—America, Western Europe—in recent months.

[Shishlin] I think that it is, to a certain degree, necessary in this way, because a fundamental change can only occur in international life if the Soviet-American system of relations is renewed completely. Therefore, there is nothing surprising in that Soviet foreign policy has given priority to this issue.

Having said that, the blame level at the Soviet diplomacy also has grounds because the Soviet Union could only have gained if, for example, it had been the Soviet Union itself which initiated the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Hungary instead of waiting for the call of the Hungarian Parliament. In this case the current material, environmental protection, and other type of disputes would be much easier to solve, and the feelings of the people toward the Soviet Union and Soviet troops would also be different.

[Izbeki] How much emphasis can be placed on the fact that in Eastern Europe the changes in regime have led to a weakening of relations [between Eastern Europe and the USSR], whereas in the Soviet Union a change in the regime has not yet occurred?

[Shishlin] This fact, too, casts shadow on our relations because we would indeed get a false picture if we claimed that the changes are in harmony. [passage omitted] Still, some are not disturbed whatsoever in this Soviet Union by the Hungarian change of regime; what is more, they say that it is natural. Others believe that the new Hungarian leadership is now not a sufficiently reliable partner, neither in economy nor in politics. This is not a dominant view, however.

[Izbeki] Let me interrupt since we are talking about nonintervention. Can the smuggling of Honecker out of Germany not be seen as an intervention?

[Shishlin] My personal view is that this is not a skillful job. I, too, consider the interests of humaneness as important, but I think that in Honecker's case it would have been possible to find a completely alternative means of medical treatment instead of bringing him from Germany to here, to a hidden place, the devil knows where.

[Izbeki] Let us return to security policy questions once more. After the trilateral meeting at Visegrad, a view emerged in the Soviet press and even among parliamentary deputies, that this regional cooperation is aimed against the Soviet Union, or at least has set as an objective that the former allies should break out together from the Soviet sphere of interest. What is your view on this?

[Shishlin] First of all the situation is that, on the one hand certain deputies and a group of the population are still contaminated by empirical thinking. They continue to consider Eastern Europe as their own sphere of interest, without even thinking through as to what the real interest in this region is for the Soviet Union. It is my conviction for example that the previous system of relations did not give license toward USSR's development, on the contrary it was rather a restraining force. [passage omitted] Therefore, I believe that the Prague-Budapest-Warsaw triangle, or the cooperation of the five, thus including Belgrade and Vienna, present no danger whatsoever—especially from the point of view of security policy—present no threat whatsoever for the Soviet Union.

West Europe

Gorbachev Examines Internal Affairs, FRG Ties

PM2403195991 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 25 Mar 91 Union Edition p 4

[Interview with USSR President M.S. Gorbachev by the German weekly DER SPIEGEL on 20 March; place not given: "M.S. Gorbachev Interview with DER SPIEGEL Magazine"]

[Text] As has already been reported, the USSR president gave an interview to this well-known German weekly 20 March. The text is being published with some slight unsubstantive abbreviations.

[DER SPIEGEL] Mr. President, may I congratulate you on the victory in the all-Union referendum?

[Gorbachev] You can congratulate our people. At this difficult and crucial period full of great concerns, problems, and experiences, they did not lose their heads but remained devoted to great values. The Union is one of our multinational state's most fundamental values. The fact that the referendum advocated retention of the Union as a renewed federation and a Union of sovereign states is an event of great importance.

[DER SPIEGEL] How do you envisage the renewed Union?

[Gorbachev] The draft Union treaty has been published. That is why I will just give the outlines of this document, namely—we are leaving the unitary state behind, even though it was declared as a federation in the constitution. We are moving toward a renewed federation—a Union of sovereign states, where powers will be firmly apportioned between the center and the republics. The center will retain what the republics need in order to work in concert in the interests of all of them taken together. Basic rights and freedoms reflecting the profound application of sovereignty [suverenizatsiya] to our multinational state will all be under their control. In other words, the state is changing fundamentally.

[DER SPIEGEL] Was that the point of the referendum?

[Gorbachev] The positive outcome of the referendum and the existence of the draft Union treaty—a document worked out by competent representatives from nine republics—make it possible to move more rapidly toward the conclusion of the treaty and, subsequently, toward the adoption of a new USSR Constitution. As a result, we will achieve new structures and a new distribution of power in the country.... Not just power.

The treaty is a highly democratic document. It serves the interests of peoples and nations, and the interests of individuals and all citizens. I am happy with the document—it is indeed necessary to remove the negative points which emerged during the profound changes in the Union and to clearly define powers between the center and the republics, collaboration between executive authorities, and so forth. This will make it possible to move relations in the entire huge human community that is the Soviet Union in a new direction and to normalize them.

[DER SPIEGEL] Is the referendum result binding on those Union republics which did not take part in it?

[Gorbachev] Some of them have stated that they will hold it later, others that they will take no part either in the referendum or in the signing of the Union treaty. That is the first point.

Second, there is now an opportunity to sign a Union treaty with those republics which advocate it. This will be done in the very near future. The draft treaty is currently before the Union republic Supreme Soviets. Those who do not sign the Union treaty should decide where they stand. Both sides should decide where they stand. Relations with the Union are one thing: The Union is a unified economic space, a unified all-Union market with coordinated institutions of Union importance. Relations with those who have not signed the treaty would be another matter. They would be relations of quite a different kind.

Anyone who advocates democratic positions must, above all, express the people's will. In this case, that means holding the referendum rather than carrying out sociological research. If the result is in favor of secession from the Union, then a process which I would call a "divorce" will begin within a constitutional framework. As a result, different relations will emerge. These will be international in nature rather than intra-Union—with its features of what I would call a most-favored system. The people should clearly realize this beforehand.

[DER SPIEGEL] But divorces are painful.

[Gorbachev] I want to add something important: I always bring this idea to the attention of all republics. The experience which we already have shows that the best route to self-determination lies within the federation framework and through the implementation of the concept of a Union of sovereign republics, which presupposes a high degree of freedom, autonomy, and sovereignty, while retaining the necessary ties and cooperation.

But that is not all. It is simply impossible for us to split up. It would be madness.

It took a thousand years for a unified state to take shape. Many ethnic processes took shape within it. Far-reaching labor distribution, burden-sharing, and population demographics have come about. People have settled throughout the entire state, irrespective of the territory to which they initially belonged. More than 70 million people currently live outside their own republics. There are some 30 million mixed marriages. Only 30 percent of borders are fixed by state acts—the rest have come about haphazardly.

When people advocate the Union, they are primarily thinking of this living fabric, this complex and fragile material of human relations. Just imagine if all this started breaking up and separating under the pressure of separatism, autarchism, and so forth. That would be a disaster for all the USSR's peoples.

[DER SPIEGEL] That is why most people voted for a renewed Union in the referendum.

[Gorbachev] People felt that division would affect the way of life of very many people. Simple common sense suggests as much. That is why I am opposed to certain republics leaving the Union now. Many people voted even in republics whose legislatures did not want to hold the referendum. They realized what it was about. Overcoming all the bans—legal, militia, and police bans—people sought an opportunity to take part in the referendum. That fact supports my position.

At the same time, I am committed to profoundly reforming the state. Life is richer than any theory or forecast.

[DER SPIEGEL] So, Mr. President, is there no realistic chance for certain Union republics—the three Baltic republics, for instance—to secede from the Union? This issue led to civil war in the United States in the last century. But we can assume that you will not have a civil war, Boris Yeltsin notwithstanding. Nonetheless, do you see separation as being possible only in theory but not in practice?

[Gorbachev] If the population of a certain republic clearly expresses its wish to leave the Union and if it refuses to sign the Union treaty, a constitutional process will begin. We have a law on secession. Incidentally, a presidential decree has set up three government groups to deal with each Baltic republic on these questions. These groups will meet in the very near future and begin to compare their positions. In fact, this is already happening.

But other interesting things are happening as well. Those people who are involved with the economies of these republics are coming to Moscow to take part in all relevant Union events. They took part in the elaboration of the economic agreement for 1991, they signed the food agreement, they took part in drawing up proposals on price reform. Academics from the Baltic republics have been attending sessions of the USSR Academy of Sciences and participating in the implementation of scientific programs. Representatives of the republics' intelligentsia are working at the Soviet Culture Foundation.

But, at the same time, there has been a kind of political introversion [zatsiklennost politikoy]. This is simply disastrous both for the Union and for the peoples of the republics themselves. The position taken by certain politicians presents a major difficulty and obstacle to the building of new relations. They are driving their people and republics into a historical dead end.

[DER SPIEGEL] Are you thereby saying that the principle of the freedom to choose your own path—the right to which you recognize all other peoples as having—does not apply to the peoples of the Soviet Union?

[Gorbachev] I think that, clearly, we need to take the position which we formerly took with regard to the East European countries. They did not like the CEMA, they criticized both it and us a very great deal. They probably found us very tiresome. They were in such a hurry to look to the West. We could see this and we thought: Let us take account of these feelings. Let them decide what they need, what kind of society and partners they want to have. Slightly more than a year has gone by. Now we can hear them saying, as it were, that it would be a good idea to start meeting, concluding treaties, and living in a new way.... We have been thinking during this period.

[DER SPIEGEL] But, even so, this was a very wise decision.

[Gorbachev] I think it was the only correct decision, because, through it, were were simply formalizing something that had objectively come about as a result of internal processes. Probably we need to use it to try to build new relations. I think that all the positive points of the past decades will be preserved rather than lost.

[DER SPIEGEL] Or returned, as in the case of Honecker?

[Gorbachev] Honecker is a humanitarian problem, a human problem. In the FRG, too, there are probably politicians whose labors have not been to the liking of all Germans. Or are all your politicians perfect?

[DER SPIEGEL] Both countries have seen plenty of trials and would not want to see any more.

[Gorbachev] Nothing will come of "witch-hunts."

[DER SPIEGEL] The Honecker case has probably drawn attention to the international-law aspect: Was it any accident that he was moved to the USSR two days before German sovereignty came into force?

[Gorbachev] No, of course not. As someone involved in German sovereignty, I can say that my conscience is clear on this point. I can answer your question. About sovereignty. I think that it should not be elevated to such a level. The fact that there are hundreds of thousands of Soviet soldiers on your territory does not undermine your sovereignty. They are different facts. But both of them are consequences of the same process. That process is very complex. One thing the Germans do not lack is philosophy. It was not for nothing that they emerged from the war and traveled the long and hard historical path to democracy. Although you can always find people anywhere who want revenge for any reason.

[DER SPIEGEL] There is a widespread impression in the West that, after taking a giant step forward, perestroyka has, if not come to a halt, at least taken a step back—that is, to use Lenin's words: One step forward, two steps back?

[Gorbachev] Let me give you my understanding and my assessment on this. People can say and write what they like. One of the messages of congratulation I received on my 60th birthday quoted a saying of Abraham Lincoln's. I will quote it from memory: "If I were responsible for everything written about me, I would have no time to work. I do the very best I can, and mean to keep doing so until the end. If the end brings me out all right, all the attacks against me will not amount to anything. If the end brings me out wrong, 12 angels swearing I was right would make no difference."

So, what stage of perestroyka have we reached? I have no doubt that the choice of political course was right. It was a response to our society's urgent problems. Since our society is so vast and has such a great impact on world processes, our perestroyka will also influence development within civilization.

[DER SPIEGEL] Permit me to ask a question on my own behalf. As far as I can see, there is not a single sensible person in the world who would not hope for perestroyka to succeed or not wish it well. Without your creative energy and hard work, Mr. President, there would not be any perestroyka.

[Gorbachev] The energy is still there and the course is still there: It is a course of democracy, glasnost, the reform of property relations, the adoption of a mixed economy, and the implementation of new types of motivation for labor. It means new soviets tied in to real elections, it means the distribution of functions between them, and the formation of a rule-of-law state. A feature of this process is that we are talking about a multinational country.

Now everything in it is moving.

[DER SPIEGEL] There is indeed movement everywhere—but in what direction? Have losses been caused solely by "friction?"

[Gorbachev] No. I must say that the greatest losses have been bound up with the fact that we have not had a synchronized approach in this process. There have been the most major failings and shortcomings in this area. Here is an illustration: We adopted laws on the enterprise and on cooperatives, but there has not been a new economic infrastructure nor a tax policy.

[DER SPIEGEL] Enterprises have used their autonomy mainly to raise wages.

[Gorbachev] We took them, as it were, out of the old management system without creating a new, regulated system—and we were derided for it. Or take the sphere of interethnic relations. We were slow off the mark. The banner of reforming the state was hoisted by the separatists—who had quite different aims. As a result, we have seen a deregulated market, interethnic conflicts, and a lack of coordination between various executive components. All this has led to the present situation. Two directions that were in conflict back at the beginning of perestroyka are again opposing each other. Those who do not want to change anything cry: "Perestroyka was unnecessary, we should turn the clock back." The others are extremists who work to the slogan "the worse, the better." These two extremes are now coming together.

[DER SPIEGEL] Is your position still centrist? Is it viable?

[Gorbachev] Everything we are currently doing is a question of tactics, to maintain our course—more than that, to create the prerequisites for its resolute advancement.

[DER SPIEGEL] On what do you base your optimism?

[Gorbachev] On the fact that people are undoubtedly convinced that there must be no going back to the past. At the same time, they are starting to look into the dangerous recipes on which populism is based. We will continue moving down the reform road. We are now in the most crucial phase of those reforms.

[DER SPIEGEL] To what extent are you helped by your very considerable foreign policy successes?

[Gorbachev] What we have done in the international arena these past few years was what we needed to do. But everybody needed it, too. We remain committed to this course. There have been attempts to cast doubt on certain decisions and steps taken during the perestroyka years. But I must say that these attempts are doomed to failure. Everyone can see that the country has turned outward toward other peoples. Many friends and partners have appeared. The disarmament process is under way. We can now to a considerable extent, through conversion, reposition the defense sector of the economy in people's interests. In short, it is a case of our own interests and those of other countries coinciding.

Some people may think that it would be a good thing if, as a result of perestroyka, the Soviet Union reduced its role and turned into something amorphous. But only a small number of people think that way. The rest think differently.

[DER SPIEGEL] America and the Soviet Union developed a definite line over the Gulf conflict. At the end of the war do you have any fears that we could see a kind of strengthening of America and a weakening of the Soviet Union?

[Gorbachev] I can say that we had a useful exchange of opinions with the Americans and put forward our respective views on how to behave in this new phase in that region. We have a great degree of mutual understanding. It is important that the cooperation which existed throughout the conflict should be maintained at this stage, too.

The Arab countries should play their part in the settlement. The problems of regional security should be discussed in detail. Nothing should be left which could cause concern or lead to new conflicts. We believe that both Iraq and Iran should participate in the settlement. That is very important.

One other point: We reminded our American friends that the situation as regards the troop presence should be returned to the position which prevailed on 1 August last year.

[DER SPIEGEL] An Iraq with or without Saddam?

[Gorbachev] Iraq itself should decide who it needs.

[DER SPIEGEL] Would you as a politician subscribe to the view of the historian Aleksey Kiva that an authoritarian phase is inevitable en route from totalitarianism to democracy?

[Gorbachev] I would not, but I want to say that two elements are needed, otherwise there can be no retreat from totalitarianism. These are, above all, the development of democracy, and a reliably functioning legal system. Authority should be strong. That is not at odds with democracy.

[DER SPIEGEL] So just what does a market economy mean to you? Simply contractual ties between enterprises, the abandonment of regulated prices, the introduction of ruble convertibility, the changing of property relations?

[Gorbachev] First, I think that the market is the same thing for us as it is for everyone else. It is not a German, Russian, or Chinese invention—it is an institution of civilization. That is why the transition to the market is normal.

We cannot go on living the way we did before. Incentives and activeness were suppressed and there was no economic freedom. That is a dead end.

[DER SPIEGEL] Where is the way out?

[Gorbachev] We can only go forward now. We must be resolute about this, but, at the same time, we must weigh things up very carefully. We are moving toward a mixed economy by way of reforming property relations. But when we started out we had nothing—no market infrastructure and no trained personnel. All this had to be put in place, otherwise we would have made a mess of it.... The main subjects of the market should be enterprises operating on a level playing field.

The price problem: We are reforming the entire pricing system. But we started with compensation. Tell me, who had ever pre-announced price rises before? But we were forced to do so, in order to make people understand and see things clearly for themselves.

[DER SPIEGEL] But is it not a contradiction if you want to introduce market relations at the same time as the state is issuing new prices?

[Gorbachev] No, it is not. First, there is no market anywhere that is not state-regulated. But we are consciously taking this step—we are setting price ceilings and providing compensation in full. Why? That is our reality. We have to leave this distorted pricing system behind and introduce a realistic system, more in line with the rest of the world. Then we can start letting prices float as the market dictates.

[DER SPIEGEL] What about privatization and private ownership?

[Gorbachev] This will be a sector alongside the state and cooperative sectors. Ruble convertibility is a complex element in the transition to a market economy. We now believe that this problem needs to be solved more quickly than we had previously thought. This is necessary for the domestic market and particularly for cooperation with other countries. That is why it is very urgent for us. Those are the components of the transition to the market. But how can we carry this out given the state in which our economy currently finds itself? In order to prevent a collapse we are taking certain measures, including some of an administrative nature. We want to stabilize economic ties and maintain a definite cycle to the whole process.

Of course, there will have to be major structural reform. Our economy is distorted in favor of heavy-industry sectors and has a disproportionate defense sector. This requires some abrupt changes. Only 6-8 percent of our capital is used for consumer goods. This is the second aspect of the process of change.

[DER SPIEGEL] What contribution could the Germans—who have been able to restore their own sovereignty thanks to you, Mr. President—make to ensuring the success of economic restructuring? Voices have been raised in the Soviet press stating that the Germans are ungrateful, given the Soviet Union's role in their unification.

[Gorbachev] I think that our relations are reaching a very high level—both in the sphere of politics and in the sphere of economics, culture, and security. The most important point is that these relations are taking shape in an atmosphere of growing trust. This has allowed us to achieve very major agreements. Vast opportunities are opening up for increased cooperation and, I am sure, for bringing closer together peoples who have historically always "looked to each other," even though they have sometimes found themselves in very dramatic situations.

I think that profound changes have now taken place in Germany. These are feeding through to our new relations and making politicians confident to move toward each other and cooperate. This is in line with both peoples' interests. I think that it will make Europe stronger. I could say that it is a very major factor in world politics, too. In short, I hold a promising view of our relations.

We are counting on the Germans showing their solidarity during this difficult transitional period for us. That is the guarantee of healthy cooperation in the future. In the longer term we can talk about the large-scale nature of our cooperation.

[DER SPIEGEL] From your viewpoint, are there any wishes left unfulfilled by the Germans? We realize, of course, that Germany must make its contribution.

[Gorbachev] We are conducting a dialogue on building up our cooperation. I am referring to the talks with FRG Chancellor H. Kohl and the recent meeting with H.D. Genscher.

[DER SPIEGEL] The "investments" in our future on both our sides have not been in vain: Attitudes to the Soviet Union in Germany have assumed a really friendly nature.

[Gorbachev] I am of the same opinion. This choice did not come about immediately and is not understood by everybody. But I believe we made the right choice, and I agree—the common investments in our joint future have been justified.

[DER SPIEGEL] How might the Germans make amends for the damage caused to those Soviet citizens who were deported to Germany during the war?

[Gorbachev] This is an element in the Soviet-German dialogue. I can say that the German side is not ducking talks on dramatic moments in the history of our relations. As yet this is the only answer I can give to your question.

[DER SPIEGEL] What solution do you see for Soviet citizens of German nationality?

[Gorbachev] The Germans in our country enjoy great prestige. They are highly appreciated for everything. Nobody wants them to move away from the places where they currently live. They are an integral part of our people.

But there are problems of a legal order—I mean the restoration of autonomy. There is also a wish to find forms and methods for achieving this. I will say that what we are dealing with here is not an isolated case.

I have visited the Volga region and Saratov Oblast, where the Volga Germans' republic used to be located. Extensive reclamation work has been done there in the long intervening years, dozens of kolkhozes and sovkhozes have emerged, people have settled the land. How is the matter of autonomy to be decided in these conditions? A movement in favor of returning autonomy to the Germans has emerged in actual oblasts—Volgograd and Ulyanovsk Oblasts. I pin some hopes on this. But as yet my expectation has not been fulfilled. I will soon be receiving delegates to the upcoming congress of Germans headed by Academician Raushenbakh.

[DER SPIEGEL] Mine is a very short question. Are we right in our impression that for you the difference between capitalism and socialism is not so important as the global contradiction between poor and rich? Where do you see the Soviet Union being when the conflict between East and West is buried; do you see the Soviet Union inside or outside the European fortress?

[Gorbachev] A "little question" indeed. In general I am a convinced supporter of the socialist idea and am confident that what we are doing in our country is a continuation of the general cause of socialism.

As for the contradictions or differences between, say, capitalism and socialism, on this I stand firmly for the principle that every people determines its own destiny and makes its own choice of what kind of country it is going to live in, which ideology it is going to profess, which god it going to pray to and which not....

[DER SPIEGEL] ...Or not pray at all....

[Gorbachev] ...How many parties it is going to have, and of what kind, which party should rule, and so forth. All this is the right of the people themselves. I respect this right. Everyone must attempt to prove that his system is best. I even believe that latent in this diversity and definite contradiction is a complex stimulus to seek, compare, and compete.

We are open to cooperation with all countries and respect the choice of the peoples themselves. This is the main thing. Making a choice is not so easy. It often happens that not every choice develops within the context of the development of all civilizations.

As for the second part of the question, the answer to this lies in what we call the new thinking. It proceeds from the principle of a balance of interests. This is the second of the main postulates of the new thinking. The developed countries, the former metropolitan countries, have their interests. But the third world also has its interests, which are of no less significance. Unless this is heeded, unless interests are combined, nothing will come of anything. We could then enter a phase of development that would be painful [ostryy] for the entire world community.

This kind of approach is sometimes seen as messianism, as unrealizable—that is, it is seen in a negative light. But there have been a great many things that have begun as heresy and then been taken up by the world. Fortunately more realism is emerging in assessments of what is happening in the developing world. It can thus be hoped that here, too, there will be progress toward equal cooperation, although it will also be difficult to give up some of the things that individual nations have achieved.

[DER SPIEGEL] This is what is currently happening in the Gulf....

[Gorbachev] All this requires a responsible policy and responsible thinking. We have seen from our own experience what happens when relationships are disrupted. This has been within the framework of just a single country, although we also recognized that our internal relationships needed to be radically changed. Thus worldwide relationships also need to be adapted to the new era, taking account of the balance of interests. Otherwise there could be a reversal of processes which have already begun in world politics: in the disarmament field, in respect of the priority of political approaches in conflict situations, and so forth.

I believe there are still powerful forces wishing to bring back the atmosphere and instruments of the "cold war." But this does not mean that they express objective needs—on the contrary. Here lies the irreversibility of what has begun, although everything will have to overcome difficulties.

I would end our meeting with the following words: Through your magazine I convey the warmest greetings and good wishes to the Germans from the Soviet people. Here in the Soviet Union—despite the difficulties it is currently experiencing—we are in favor of Soviet-German relations scaling new heights and bearing fruit for our two peoples and the peoples of Europe and the entire world.

Gorbachev-Genscher Talks, German Ties Assessed

PM2203155391 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 22 Mar 91 Second Edition p 4

["Viewpoint" by Boris Orekhov: "Sometimes Struck With Disbelief"]

[Text] The meeting was one of those that not only confirm loyalty to commitments and to the chosen course of cooperation and mutual support and not only strengthen political and personal trust. The significance of these meetings lies in the fact that they are followed by practical actions that enhance real collaboration.

Thus ends the official account of M.S. Gorbachev's meeting with Hans-Dietrich Genscher, German deputy federal chancellor and foreign minister, during his visit to our country. These words would seem to embrace the range of questions that are of fundamental significance for Soviet-German relations. The meeting with the Soviet president kind of summed up the fruitful exchange of opinions H.-D. Genscher had with his Soviet colleague A. Bessmertnykh, which, judging by the official account, was not all plain sailing.

Why, indeed, should one expect Soviet-German relations to be all peace and quiet and milk and honey? The profound changes taking place in our country have left a mark on them. There was a reduction in trade last year. When one considers that one is talking about one of our leading foreign trade partners in the West, one can imagine the significance of this fact. For us above all, I think.

PRAVDA has recently published many reports from abroad containing Western business circles' assessments of the current state of our economy and our foreign economic structures. The disarray has become the talk of the town. Will it all continue in that direction? Is there no way of saving the situation? The participants in the Moscow Soviet-German talks said that they would "take proper steps to prevent a sharp reduction" in trade between the two countries. I believe our German partner will indeed take these steps. But will we?

There are other factors influencing the process of the development of Soviet-German relations. One must mention the problems involved in integrating Germany's eastern Laender into the economy of the country as a whole, the alarming events in a number of southeast European countries, and some other circumstances that are objectively impeding the normal process of cooperation.

Nonetheless, there are grounds for optimism when one looks at these relations. The whole postwar stage in Europe has ended and a new one has begun; the constructive foundation of it has already been laid, with the Soviet-German factor playing an outstanding role in it. Soviet-German reconciliation is certainly of historic, strategic significance. In the light of this, the high-ranking German politician's visit to the USSR must not be underestimated. It is very important. Important as the next stage in the continuous, intensive dialogue and as a confirmation of the presence of goodwill on both sides.

Against the background of the doubts currently being expressed by certain circles in the West about the Soviet policy of perestroyka and its stability, the German leadership's position, in particular that of the chancellor and his deputy, is so eminently constant and consistent that sometimes one is struck with disbelief.... But this fact is from the domain of present-day realities, so to speak, so one must rejoice.

A final word: There was a discussion in the Kremlin about the 50th anniversary of the Hitlerite forces' invasion of our country. This event, this date will be duly observed and will take place under the banner of the radical change in relations between the two peoples, their reconciliation. This is very important today both for the Germans and for us. Indeed, 22 June 1941 is an old ache in the heart of every Soviet person.

Churkin Interviewed on FRG Troop Withdrawals

LD2203132891 Moscow All-Union Radio Mayak Network in Russian 0530 GMT 22 Mar 91

[Text] Now we turn to an important subject. Today at the USSR Supreme Soviet discussion will be continued on the treaty between our country and the FRG on the conditions of the temporary sojourn and planned withdrawal of Soviet troops from the territory of Germany, as well as on the agreement on some transitional measures. In this connection, our diplomatic correspondent, Viktor Levin, asked Vitaliy Churkin, head of the Information Directorate of the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs, to answer a number of questions. Here is a recording of their conversation:

[Begin recording] [Levin] Vitaliy Ivanovich, I happened to hear that the Soviet Union, not only in drawing up this specific treaty on the conditions of the temporary sojourn and planned withdrawal of Soviet troops from the territory of Germany, but also in other accords with Germany as well, accepted the German conditions virtually to the detriment of its own interests. What is your opinion?

[Churkin] Such assertions evoke bewilderment in me. I do not know what calls them forth—either a lack of knowledge of the subject or ill intention. Here is it probably a case of enmity in general to the perestroyka foreign policy of the Soviet Union. This is probably also a particular case of the assertions that one hears about all the Soviet Union has done is to make one-sided concessions to the West over the last few years, in the years of perestroyka. But then the question arises of how we, as a result of the endless chain of unilateral concessions, have managed to create a situation in which, in spite of the extreme difficulty of the international situation in the country, we have an extremely favorable atmosphere surrounding us on the outside. We have a situation in which the countries and peoples surrounding us—that same West—are striving to assist us to achieve the goals that we have set for our country. We have moved away from the dogmatic ideas of the past, which led both our foreign policy and our country in general into an impasse from which no way out could be seen until April 1985.

Returning to your specific question about the alleged unconditional concessions to the German side, I can simply say that the Soviet minister of foreign affairs had to meet Genscher, FRG minister of foreign affairs, 14 or 15 times. I do not remember the exact number. They met last year and held many long hours of exhausting conversations. Why was it necessary for our president and Chancellor Kohl to sit for hours at Wachliese discussing details and questions relating to the relations between our countries? Surely it was not in order to agree to all the German conditions. Naturally, this is not the case. It is a question of a radical turning point in our relations with Germany. At issue here is the fact that we created the foundation for our relations with that country to be the basis of a stable European order and the further fruitful developments of cooperation between the Soviet and German people's in many spheres.

Speaking about and being even more specific about the questions of the treaty on the withdrawal of Soviet troops from the territory of Germany, I would like to note the following: Yes, indeed, by the end of 1994 Soviet troops will be withdrawn from the territory of Germany, from the territory of the former GDR. Military men note that, from a strategic point of view, their presence there has to considerable extent, if not fully, ceased to make sense in connection with the fact that our troops are being withdrawn from the territory of other countries in Eastern Europe, in connection with the fact that from 1 April the military organization of the Warsaw Pact will no longer exist. Therefore, from that point of view, the more swiftly we withdraw the troops from the territory of the former GDR and can completely concentrate on ensuring the defense capability of our country, the better.

As a result of those treaties, this treaty and the agreement on several transitional measures that also have to be ratified in the Supreme Soviet, the German side is rendering financial support, both for the sojourn of Soviet troops on the territory of Germany for a period of almost four years, as well as regarding the withdrawal to the territory of the Soviet Union. I would like to note that the financial problem here is very great. You see, at issue here are 500,000 Soviet citizens—soldiers, officers, and the members of their families. At present, hard currency has to be spent on their upkeep. I have to say that the German side is meeting us halfway here. Before these agreements come into force, before they are ratified, the German side is giving us this financial support, as an advance payment as it were. In principle, it need not do that.

[Levin] The maintenance is fairly impressive, a sum of 13 billion German marks.

[Churkin] At present, the situation is something of paradox. We have already ratified the treaties giving Germany complete sovereignty, in which it is envisaged that Germany's rights will be fully restored, but for the moment we have not ratified those agreements according to which we will receive money from Germany. The Germans are saying: When will you ratify those agreements so we can start building houses for the members of your servicemen's families in accordance with these agreements? There is a whole complex of related issues in which we are greatly interested.

[Levin] The detractors of the treaty on the conditions of Soviet troops' stay in and planned withdrawal from German territory also mention that it contains an absolutely unprecedented demand for Soviet troops to put the occupied territory in order.

[Churkin] First of all, I must say that the treaty has no clause whatsoever containing any demands of this kind on our troops that are leaving the territory of the former GDR. Second, I would like to draw your attention to the significant, strange comments about occupied territory being made by Soviet people. This is a certain rehash of statements by those Western voices that are far from friendly to us and that assert that the Soviet Army on the territory of East European countries is an occupational Army. As regards the GDR, I would like to recall that our troops were occupational only from 1945 to 1949. After the GDR was formed in 1949, their status changed and the new status was confirmed by the accords we signed with the GDR in 1957. Since then our troops were officially temporary stationed on the territory of the GDR, a state that was friendly to us. This is not a question of a territory occupied by Soviet troops and which the Soviet troops are now leaving. I would like to note that, in my view, certain critics complain not so much about the accords signed with Germany last year as about the entire postwar process of settlement with Germany. For example, the issue of reparations was solved long ago. It was solved in the process of our contacts with the GDR as early as the 1950's. Therefore, it is senseless to return to all those issues now. Now we have to solve this entire package of most complex problems not on the basis of the situation that existed in 1945 when we came to Germany as a conquering power, but taking into account the reality after that in our relations with the GDR. For example, now we have to solve—and one must mention that we continue to discuss this with the German side; specifically, this was discussed in conversations with Genscher in Moscow the other day—we have to solve the issue of the property our troops will leave on German territory when withdrawing, and the issue of selling this property. But the problem also consists of the fact that some structures belonging to our troops are situated on the territory of the former GDR. That land does not belong to us in accordance with the agreements we concluded with the GDR several decades ago. How can you sell a house or bargain about it if it stands on a plot of land that does not belong to you? [end recording]

Army Announces Plans To Sell Property in FRG

AU2503110991 Berlin DER MORGEN in German 22 Mar 91 p 2

[Unattributed report: "Soviet Army Announces Sale of Real Estate"]

[Text] Berlin—The Western Group of Soviet Forces plans to offer most of the buildings that will not be used after their withdrawal from East Germany on the free market. This intention was announced in an interview by Major General Stepanov, who is responsible for construction and accommodation. There are still no detailed regulations for the sale or for examining and recognizing potential claims by the German side, however. In addition, it must be clarified how the value of the real estate that is to be sold will be assessed and how clearing will take place. The general said that the value of the real estate, which he called Soviet property, is about 10.5 billion German marks.

CPSU's Dzasokhov Interviewed on Honecker

AU2503094391 Berlin NEUES DEUTSCHLAND in German 21 Mar 91 p 2

[Interview with Aleksandr Dzasokhov, CPSU Politburo member, secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, and chairman of the Supreme Soviet Foreign Policy Committee, by an unidentified NOVOSTI reporter; place and date not given: "Honecker Wanted To Move"]

[Text] For the first time a member of the CPSU Politburo has commented on Erich Honecker's move to the USSR. Aleksandr Dzasokhov, secretary of the CPSU Central Committee and chairman of the Supreme Soviet Foreign Policy Committee, answered questions asked by NOVOSTI.

[NOVOSTI] What are your comments on Erich Honecker's transfer to the Soviet Union?

[Dzasokhov] The Soviet public has recently been concerned about the fact that the number of cases is increasing in which citizens of the united Germany are being persecuted because of their previous work for the state and their previous political activities. The logic of Germany's unification presupposed that all its future citizens would get the same constitutional and civic rights. This also applies to the GDR leadership and, among them, Erich Honecker. This man of advanced age, who ruled a sovereign state for many years, has a rich, complicated, and contradictory past. If he and others express the wish to spend the last years of their lives in another country, I do not see any reason to refuse this. Erich Honecker is linked with the Soviet Union by decades of relations. Perhaps our colleagues in the FRG could explain their extremely angry reaction to his leaving in more detail. We would like to hear this explanation, because we, too, have our arguments.

[NOVOSTI] Does this mean that Erich Honecker has expressed the wish to move to the Soviet Union?

[Dzasokhov] Absolutely. Even more: I know that he is very pleased by this move.

[NOVOSTI] Was Honecker's evacuation a condition for the ratification of the Soviet-German agreements?

[Dzasokhov] Some politicians and legislators see a connection with the ratification of the treaties. There is no reason to establish any connection between this important but, after all, small episode and the process of shaping German-Soviet relations, however.

[NOVOSTI] Court proceedings have been started against Honecker in the FRG. Are you not bothered by this?

[Dzasokhov] The level of relations between our countries makes it possible to determine exactly what is legal and what is not legal. This will be done.

Ties to Former GDR 'Friends', Honecker Viewed

PM2203230591 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 23 Mar 91 First Edition p 5

[Article by D. Krylov under the rubric "Readers Are Concerned": "Has A Line Been Drawn Under the Past?"]

[Text] The editorial mailbag has been receiving many letters asking questions which basically boil down to the following idea: By reaching an agreement with Germany have we really drawn a line under the years of confrontation and cold war, thereby cutting ourselves off from those whom until quite recently we called our friends? Why are statesmen, party and social figures, and staffers with the former GDR law and order organs and armed forces being prosecuted for their activities during the period when they were not under West German jurisdiction?

These readers' questions are reasonable. Indeed, criminal proceedings have been instituted against a number of former GDR leaders, and some of them have been arrested. There is an evident tendency to prosecute people not for breaking the law but for their political views and actions in the past.

To my mind, the sentiment of revenge is not the best approach in this situation. I find it hard as a human being to accept everything that is happening around the aged Erich Honecker. Admittedly, the tone of statements about him has changed somewhat of late. It seems that a sense of compassion is starting to prevail over the desire to take revenge against a political opponent at all costs. The magazine DER SPIEGEL asked its readers whether it is ethical in the present situation to prosecute a 78-year-old man who is confined to his hospital bed? The question was asked openly—the more so as, under the existing practice in the FRG, even former Nazi criminals are not prosecuted in such cases.

The legality of trying E. Honecker is called into considerable question by Professor Gerald Gruenwald, director of the Bonn University Institute of Criminal and Trial Law. In an interview with the Hannover-published NEUE PRESSE the academic notes: "All that is punishable is what contravened the law in force at the time of the act."

Letters to the editorial office have been expressing confusion about the prosecution of hundreds and thousands of people who were bound to the Soviet Union by bonds of friendship. Readers are asking, for instance, how the USSR should assess the Bavarian Ministry of Internal Affairs' intention to declare the Party of Democratic Socialism "unconstitutional" and why the question has been raised of placing it under the control of the federal department for the protection of the constitution? In other words, it is a question of outlawing the party.

I would like to believe that these phenomena are just a temporary revival of cold war politics. In my view, it is very important to prevent such a turn of events for the future healthy development of Soviet-German relations. Both sides should sincerely strive not to go beyond the line which they originally agreed to draw under the past.

In conclusion, may I disagree with readers' assertions that the Soviet Union has left its friends in the former GDR to the whim of fate. These claims could only appear because by no means everything is known about the USSR's repeated attempts at the most varied levels to influence the German leadership's position in favor of a humane and farsighted approach to the problem that is genuinely in keeping with legal norms.

Article 1 of the Treaty of Good-Neighborliness, Partnership, and Cooperation includes the following principle among those which the high contracting parties pledged to follow in developing their relations: The USSR and the FRG... "will place people, their dignity, and their rights at the center of their policy...."

Readers are suggesting a correct decision, so let us not forget about this.

Supreme Soviet

Resolution on Miners Strikes Published

PM2203164791 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 23 Mar 91 Union Edition p 1

[USSR Supreme Soviet Resolution: "On the Miners' Strikes"]

[Text] Having discussed the situation prevailing in coal-mining regions, the USSR Supreme Soviet expresses concern at the deterioration in the socioeconomic situation in miners' collectives and in the country as a whole. The continuing strikes are leading to a further deepening of the crisis and a deterioration in the living conditions of all Soviet people, including miners.

The USSR Supreme Soviet categorically disagrees with the idea of substituting political ultimatums for solutions to economic problems, and believes that in the present-day period of the country's life such an approach can only lead to truly catastrophic consequences.

Approaching with understanding the miners' existing difficulties and problems and considering it necessary to seek constructive ways out of the crisis, the USSR Supreme Soviet resolves:

1. To deem the path of political ultimatums to be unacceptable and extremely dangerous in resolving our existing economic and social problems. To instruct miners and all other labor collectives to entirely reject strikes at this difficult period for the country and to resolve any issues that arise solely by constitutional and legal means.

2. To instruct USSR Supreme Soviet committees and commissions:

to complete within the Fifth USSR Supreme Soviet session work on the package of basic laws on the formation of a market, and laws ensuring social protection for citizens under the conditions of market relations;

to submit proposals on changing existing legislation aimed at improving the efficiency of the mechanism for implementing legislation.

3. To instruct the USSR Supreme Soviet Committee for Industry and Power Engineering, and the Soviet of the Union Commission for Labor and Social Policy together with other committees, commissions, and the USSR Cabinet of Ministers to analyze the fulfillment of the USSR Government resolutions on implementing the miners' socioeconomic demands, and to report the results to the USSR Supreme Soviet within two weeks.

4. To instruct the USSR Cabinet of Ministers together with republic governments, the relevant kray, oblast, and city soviet executive committees, and representatives of mining regions to discuss the situation in the coal industry and elaborate a system of measures to end the decline in coal production and stabilize it.

[Signed] A. Lukyanov, chairman of the USSR Supreme Soviet
Moscow, the Kremlin, 21 March 1991

City Soviet Asked To Ban 28 March Rallies

PM2203113191 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 23 Mar 91 Union Edition p 1

[USSR Supreme Soviet resolution: "On the Request From USSR People's Deputies to the USSR Cabinet of Ministers in Connection With the Rallies and Demonstrations Planned in Moscow for 28 March 1991"]

[Text] Having listened to information from V.Kh. Doguzhiyev, USSR first deputy prime minister, on the request from USSR people's deputies concerning the applications from a number of social organizations to hold rallies and demonstrations in Moscow on a working day—28 March 1991—taking into consideration the fact that these events will create considerable obstacles to the maintenance of proper public order, citizens' security, and normal working conditions for the capital's institutions, enterprises, and city transport, and guided by existing legislation, the USSR Supreme Soviet resolves:

1. To propose that the Moscow City Soviet and its Executive Committee refuse to permit the rallies and demonstrations announced by social organizations in Moscow on 28 March 1991.

2. To propose that the USSR Cabinet of Ministers and the Moscow City Soviet Executive Committee take the necessary measures to ensure reliable public order and citizens' safety.

[Signed] A. Lukyanov, chairman of the USSR Supreme Soviet
Moscow, the Kremlin, 21 March 1991

Committees Approve Foreign Treaties

LD2203151291 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1420 GMT 22 Mar 91

[Text] Moscow, 22 Mar (TASS)—A joint session of the USSR Supreme Soviet's committees on issues of defense and security and on international affairs took place today. It examined the question of submitting treaties and agreements with Italy, France, and the FRG to the USSR Supreme Soviet for ratification.

Great attention was paid to the USSR-FRG treaty on conditions for the temporary stay and planned withdrawal of Soviet troops from German territory and to the agreement between the USSR Government and the FRG Government on certain transitional measures.

At the joint session of the USSR Supreme Soviet's committees a decision was adopted to recommend that the USSR Supreme Soviet ratify the treaties and agreements taking into account specific proposals.

25 Mar Session Discusses Agriculture Crisis

LD2503101391 Moscow All-Union Radio First Program Radio-1 Network in Russian 0900 GMT 25 Mar 91

[Excerpts] The USSR Supreme Soviet is continuing its proceedings, and as always we have a live report. Our correspondent Marina Novitskaya is on the line.

[Novitskaya] Hello. During the first minutes of the sitting, Lukyanov, who is chairing the session today, urged the deputies to respond to the urgent matters of the day, and to address the problems most concerning the country. The situation in agriculture is perhaps the most burning issue. The deputies have long been alarmed by it. Deputy Lezhenko has written an application to the government. This morning Sinko, deputy prime minister, replied to it. He confirmed that the situation in agriculture is indeed serious, that the socioeconomic situation in the rural area has deteriorated, and last year the gross output of agriculture fell by more than 5 billion rubles. [passage omitted]

Comrade Sinko said that often problems are piled on the Union bodies. However, according to the law on delimitation of powers between the Union and members of the Federation, supply is the responsibility of the republics. There are however deep causes for this situation, according to the deputy prime minister. These include a continuing deterioration in the organization of deliveries, above all among producers of agricultural machinery. Voluntarism exists at the local level: Supplies of agricultural produce to the Union and republican stocks is being interrupted. Comrade Sinko also said that measures have been taken to assist those who have started their spring sowing season. Seeds, fertilizers, and fuel; have been allocated to them. Decisions have been passed to aid citizens in the rural area. That is something one cannot do without, according to the government view.

The government is determined to halt the undersupply of machinery, equipment, and fuel to agriculture. Demands will be high, Comrade Sinko said. [passage omitted]

Threats of Famine Continue

LD2503122691 Moscow TASS in English 1209 GMT 25 Mar 91

[By TASS legislative correspondent Vladimir Isachenkov]

[Text] Moscow March 25 TASS—The spectre of widespread famine in the Soviet Union was raised by Soviet parliament today as the country's parliament began a debate on agriculture. Deputies expressed concern over the lack of equipment, spare parts and seeds for spring sowing, that can have disastrous consequences for food supplies.

This year, shortages of material resources have become ruinous due to the general worsening of the situation in the economy. Addressing the session, Soviet Deputy Prime Minister Fedor Senko noted that the "agrarian sphere is being involved in the maelstrom of negative processes, characteristic of the country's economy".

"Agriculture has approached a state of agony. For the first time in the country's history, economic dislocation has begun in peace-time. For the first time, social disorder, rather than war, have given birth to the danger of famine," writer Vasiliy Belov told parliament.

"If all the country does not turn to agricultural problems, famine will come, and the urban population will flood the streets. All this will lead to the total disintegration of state structures," he said.

Belov denounced striking miners, who, he said, were putting machine-building on the verge of breakdown, thus destroying the harvest, as agriculture badly needs equipment.

Traditional appeals by representatives of the agrarian sector to the government to increase investments dominated the debate.

Despite the acuteness of the problem, parliament failed to pass the draft resolution.

Political & Social

Alksnis Says Gorbachev To Resign in Few Months

OW2203232291 Tokyo KYODO in English 2305 GMT 22 Mar 91

[Text] Moscow, March 22 KYODO—Soviet conservative leader Victor Alksnis said on Friday that President Mikhail Gorbachev will be forced to resign his post within a few months under severe criticism stemming from further aggravated economic crisis in the nation.

Alksnis, head of the "Soyuz" conservative group within the Congress of People's Deputies, said in an interview with KYODO NEWS SERVICE that Gorbachev will give in to pressure from hundreds of millions of people marching and calling for his resignation as they chant the slogan, "bread, not democratization."

Referring to the results of the recent national referendum in which Gorbachev won endorsement of his vision of a renewed Soviet federation, he said that Soyuz opposed the nationwide poll because such voting is "not able to resolve the issues."

Maintaining that larger countries collapse due to historic events such as war or revolution, Alksnis said "thanks to Gorbachev," the Soviet Union had participated in the "political game" (the referendum) for the first time in the nation's history, with a referendum to decide the state's fate.

Asked whether the results of the referendum would prove beneficial to the Gorbachev administration, he said that more than 70 percent of people supported the idea of a renewed federation and the president will take advantage of this.

Alksnis, however, added that it was not the president that the Soviet people supported in the poll.

When asked how long Gorbachev will be able to keep his grip on power, he said that Gorbachev will resign in a few months, faced with serious economic problems.

As for a Gorbachev's successor, Alksnis said he has a "well-qualified" person in mind but would not reveal the person's name.

He also said democratization in the country "can wait," stressing the current need for creation of a stronger central government to maintain the federation system, reconstruct the Soviet economy, and move toward a brisk market economy.

Alksnis Says Military Intervention Not Warranted

AU2203150991 Budapest NEPSZAVA in Hungarian 20 Mar 91 p 3

[Telephone interview with Colonel Viktor Alksnis, Supreme Soviet deputy, by NEPSZAVA correspondent; date not given: "The Soviet Union Continues To Be A Military Big Power—Will the Colonels Withdraw?"]

[Text] The Soviet public continues to be interested in the situation following the referendum held on 17 March and the Gorbachev-Yeltsin power struggle. We succeeded in reaching Viktor Alksnis on the telephone. As a deputy of the Soviet legislature, Viktor Alksnis had not previously identified with either trend. We were curious to know about the recent changes in his opinions, in a general atmosphere in which more and more people fear a military coup.

[NEPSZAVA] Most people probably voted for the Soviet unity in the referendum held on 17 March. Is the Army satisfied?

[Alksnis] Your question is too general. I cannot speak on behalf of the Army.

[NEPSZAVA] Your group in the legislature is called "the black colonels;" this is not a very flattering name. Well, are the colonels satisfied?

[Alksnis] I speak on my own behalf and I also ask you not to use the aforementioned name again. I do not have any reason to rejoice. After all, the whole referendum was an unnecessary procedure and we could predict its results well in advance. Gorbachev did not need to prove his power in this way, because it also turned out that the other camp is also big enough.

[NEPSZAVA] A few weeks ago, you were still struggling for a national salvation committee to replace Gorbachev, and you would have preferred to see Yeltsin under house arrest. What is your opinion today?

[Alksnis] I made no such categorical statements.

[NEPSZAVA] Are you backing down?

[Alksnis] This is not the way I formulated my statements! I continue to claim that we must advance on a different road and use a tougher hand.

[NEPSZAVA] Could this mean military dictatorship?

[Alksnis] There are historic situations in which the Army can play a considerable role in restoring order. The Soviet Union is not in such a situation today.

[NEPSZAVA] However, there is great confusion in a country on the brink of disintegration....

[Alksnis] As I said, the time has not yet come for the military to have the final word.

[NEPSZAVA] What are the relations between Gorbachev and the Army like?

[Alksnis] Normal.

[NEPSZAVA] Perhaps people no longer fear the Soviet Army in some parts of the world, and I do not mean Central Europe here. Do those who urge democracy in the Soviet Union not fear the military either?

[Alksnis] The days of the Army instilling fear are over. However, it is still good to know that the Soviet Union continues to be a military big power!

Soyuz Urges Opponents To Give Up 'Confrontation'

LD2303172791 Moscow TASS in English 1709 GMT 23 Mar 91

[Text] Moscow March 23 TASS—The Soyuz group rallying people's deputies of all levels, which supports President Gorbachev's course, has urged its political opponents—the Democratic Russia movement—to "give up further confrontation and pool efforts for the sake of a peaceful development of processes" in this difficult time for the country.

The appeal, adopted by the Soyuz coordinating council today, stressed that it is impermissible to destablise the situation at the time when the country is in a critical condition.

Since the leadership of Democratic Russia comes out for the expansion of the miners' strike, the stepping up of pressure exerted on the president and on the supreme authorities by means of rallies and demonstrations, the coordinating council has stated that "organisers of rallies and strikes will bear full responsibility for further destabilisation of the situation in the country, no matter under what populist slogans thay are acting."

"It is necessary to work for agreement in order to preserve and protects the sprouts of democracy," the Soyuz group stated.

Premier Pavlov Interviewed on Miners' Strike

LD2303184191 Moscow Central Television Vostok Program and Orbita Networks in Russian 1530 GMT 23 Mar 91

[Studio interview with USSR Prime Minister Valentin Sergeyevich Pavlov by announcer Aleksandr Krutov; from the "Vremya" newscast—live]

[Text] [Krutov] USSR Prime Minister Valentin Sergeyevich Pavlov is here in our studio.

Valentin Sergeyevich, we have just been showing our viewers what has been happening with the miners' strike in the metallurgical industry and the chemical and coking industry, what agricultural workers have to say about this, and the fact that the situation with regard to the economy—and in general, throughout the country—is very complex indeed. Everyone is waiting to hear what you will say.

[Pavlov] Well, what should I say? I will say what I think. I have not prepared a speech, or any special statements. For this reason what I say may not seem very smooth to some people; if so, excuse me. The point is that I am deeply convinced that the country is now in a critical situation. It finds itself in this critical situation in effect not because we do not know how to work, or do not want to work—I am deeply convinced that to a significant degree, if not to a decisive degree, this is at the present time a result of the fact that we have transferred into the sphere of the economy the political ambitions and aspirations of people who have nothing to do with the interests of, above all, the miners.

There are piles of telegrams and letters on my table. But when we begin working on them, we can see clearly that it is mostly people who are striving to present themselves as representatives of the interests of the miners. However, it turns out upon checking that they are people who have either only been to a mine on an excursion, or have never visited one at all.

[Krutov] I had a conversation a few days ago with miners, and they also have been expressing fears that the results of the strike might indeed be enjoyed by politicians and not by workers.

[Pavlov] I think the people's wisdom has over the centuries worked out very clearcut criteria, you see, but according to my own assessment and my own approach one can surely not trust people who say they are fighting for your interests and at the same time are gambling with the interests of all the other people and of the country as a whole. One may be 100 percent sure that for such people there has been nothing sacred, and never will be. They will betray people tomorrow just as they are betraying others today. Therefore, I think that no political disputes or unsatisfied ambitions should in any way interfere with the country's normal rhythm.

We must not place the country in a situation that is even worse than the situation in which we were placed during the Great Patriotic War. If the situation which you illustrated today—and this is only part of the overall picture—continues, even to the slightest degree, then one can say in advance that all of us, including the miners, will have to work for several years to make good the damage done. After all, it is not a secret to anybody, including the miners, that we have still not reestablished the level of coal extraction that was achieved in 1989, even though everybody pledged in unison to do this.

Nobody has made good the losses yet. Why, then, if we want to live better, and believe that in some way this can be achieved, will we not learn to work better?

The government has therefore never rejected a dialogue with the miners—but it must be with the miners. Therefore, we considered it our duty, and said so openly—and we are saying this now—that we will resolve the problems of the miners by working with them. We know that life is indeed difficult. Working conditions are hard. But tell me of one single industry where, basically, we can say that the ideal has been achieved, where people live and work the way we want them to, in general. Just show me such an industry. Is work easy for anybody nowadays? Is life easy for anybody today? Where is there such a place? I, for one, as premier, do not know of such a place. Life is difficult throughout the country. So we have to fight to make sure that life becomes better for everybody.

Furthermore, I would simply say that we have clearly stated that we are willing to have a dialogue. But we are not prepared—and never will be prepared—to hold talks against a background of ultimatums. That is not a dialogue. That is already war, basically. But in this instance I do not believe that the miners have declared war on the entire country. After all, what is the point of declaring war on Pavlov? Pavlov can go. His place can be taken by Ivanov or Sidorov. That is not the point. After all, the war being waged today is really one against the entire country. Do the miners need to fight the entire country? I believe that the opposite is needed, that order needs to be restored in our country.

In the first place, we need to do our utmost to ensure that the various forces trying to manipulate the miners' interests are removed from this process, and that the miners themselves resolve their own problems, the problems that we can indeed resolve today. We are not promising heaps of gold. We know that we do not have such a thing. We are saying something else. We are saying that we will do all we can. Just let us work together to find realistic ways, realistic possibilities, for doing this. That is what must be the subject of our dialogue—specifically what, when, and who.

To this end we set up 11 commissions today. The miners must be aware of this. Eleven commissions made up of representatives of various departments and various levels of the leadership have been set up. They have been dispatched to the coal regions to discuss, on the spot—not here in offices or on the streets—which specific questions need to be tackled.

These teams set off yesterday, and they are making visits today. They must determine in reality, on the spot, in relation to the subject and together with specific people, what has been done and what has not been done, and why. After that we will carry out work for implementing those tasks which we today, well, are able to realistically fulfill. Taking this as a point of departure, I would ask miners as well to show sense and understanding, and not place themselves in confrontation with the entire country. I would ask them to resume work by Monday at the latest. Then the country will, I think, breathe a sigh of relief, metallurgical workers will be able to work, and following them everything that is currently at a standstill. The entire country cannot be kept in such tension, under theat of stoppage.

[Krutov] Well, you have made a rather alarming comparison when you compared today's situation in our country with the situation during the Great Patriotic War. You know—tell us, please, miners are awaiting, I think, I am sure, awaited your speech today. Well, the commissions were sent off. Now there must be a talk with the commissions, and then with the prime minister.

[Pavlov] The fact is we must be confident, first and foremost, that the people sitting down at the table with us do indeed have powers delegated to them by miners—that they do indeed express those interests that are the true interests of the miners. We are ready for talks on this basis. Apart from this we think that it is necessary that these people not only have powers to express miners' interests, but that miners afterwards must delegate them rights, so to speak, and demand the implementation of decisions that are to be adopted. Because we have come across the situation quite often when at the beginning one representative is delegated, and when he comes to the conclusion that some specific issues can be resolved, and some specific issues cannot be currently resolved, he is immediately recalled, and they claim that they do not trust him any more. That is why we would like miners themselves to think their demands over and assess them from the point of view of reality—what can be done today, what can be done tomorrow—and assess the degree of confidence, let us say, in the person they send to the talks. Whatever happens we will, of course, try to cover the largest number of coal fields. We do not guarantee that we, with the help of our representatives, will cover the collective of every mine, but we would like the representatives of all these mines to gather accordingly at a certain coal basin, or at a combine, and then after that elected representatives with instructions approved by miners would sit down at the negotiating table. Such a plenipotentiary delegation would then, I would say, work with representatives of the government.

I am prepared to take part in it personally, and am prepared to meet these people. In this sense there will not be any holdup on our account. But to make sure that we do sit down together, in the first place this work must go ahead, and in the second place we must begin the work. I repeat that there is no point in having talks in an atmosphere of ultimata. If that is the case there is no way that our country can ever escape from the position of crisis that we have gotten it into.

[Krutov] Well, Valentin Sergeyvich, thank you.

[Pavlov] What can I say? The miners should know that I never make things up. To allow the foundry workers to work, the country needs 340,000 tonnes of coking coal every day. Today they supplied 220,000. That is the whole truth.

[Krutov] Well, Valentin Sergeyevich, you have set out your position—the government position—very clearly. The government is ready for dialogue. But there must be a readiness on the part of all sides for dialogue—that is vital. There must be readiness to get down to work as soon as possible. Thank you for coming here.

[Pavlov] You know, essentially it was my duty. I received the latest roundup of what is going on at the moment at the enterprises in our country, and I considered it absolutely vital to take the opportunity afforded by your program to speak live and directly, and to say frankly what my thoughts are. To say that... [changes thought] I would ask the miners to realize what position we are in.

[Krutov] Thank you. Valentin Sergeyevich Pavlov has just been speaking live.

Shevardnadze on 'Dictatorship,' Gorbachev

LD2303121491 Budapest MTV Television Network in Hungarian 2000 GMT 22 Mar 91

["Exclusive interview" with Eduard Shevardnadze, former USSR foreign minister and chief of the private Moscow-based Foreign Policy Organization, by unidentified correspondent; place and date not given; from the "Panorama" program—recorded; Shevardnadze speaks in Russian with superimposed translation into Hungarian]

[Text] [Correspondent] The crew of Panorama managed to hold an exclusive interview with Eduard Shevardnadze, Gorbachev's former minister of foreign affairs who resigned not long ago, and who is now the president of the newly formed Foreign Policy Organization. In a private talk, Shevardnadze sadly confirmed the earlier report by Panorama in which Roy Medvedev said the former foreign minister could not return to his home, Georgia. Georgian President Gamsakhurdia stated that 10-15 years before, when he had been the Georgian interior minister and later first secretary, it was Shevardnadze's state apparatus that twice imprisoned him for his anticommunist activity. At the beginning of the interview we did not ask Shevardnadze about this, but rather about the present coup plans.

When you spoke at the Supreme Soviet—and your speech had a stormy effect—you warned of a dictatorship. Exactly what kind of direction were you referring to then?

[Shevardnadze] That it is still a threat. The danger is still there. I did not name persons, classes within the population, or within society. But they are all quite influential people. They are an influential lot. There are such strong people. Gorbachev knows this, and others know it, too. Gorbachev said in Minsk that the country was moving toward chaos. If we find ourselves in chaos then what is the solution? Hard hands, strong hands, strict order, and dictatorship.

[Correspondent] We spoke with such representatives of this trend as Alksnis, Filatov, and Burlakov, who all say that there is a need for a provisional caretaker government, a national salvation committee, that parties and the legislature have to be banned, and dictatorship has to be imposed in the Soviet Union. Did you speak of these forces?

[Shevardnadze] I did not specifically mean these people.

[Correspondent] Probably even more important ones?

[Shevardnadze] Probably more important, more serious forces than them, like some colonels or even generals.

[Correspondent] Has this danger increased since your departure?

[Shevardnadze] It has remained unchanged. I feel the democrats are starting to consolidate, to unite. This is also a kind of result.

[Correspondent] Certain Moscow gentlemen strongly criticize your Middle East policy, for example General Filatov. He says that you have betrayed the interests of the Soviet Union as you supported the United States against Saddam Husayn, etc. What do you think of this?

[Shevardnadze] You know, I do not always read what these so-called well-wishers of mine write, because, forgive me, dilettantes write all this. These people who do not understand the point. In my view we took a standpoint in the only correct way. I know many people do not agree with this, but the results of this whole story also proved that we were right.

[Correspondent] You have also been charged with, they claim, selling Eastern Europe to the imperialists. You have sold East Germany to the imperialists, and you have given up the imperialists, and you have given up the Eastern European positions.

[Shevardnadze] These are manifestations of great power chauvinism. There is no other term for this. This is great power chauvinism itself. What have I actually been charged with? That we had so-called buffer states along our borders, that is countries which ensured the protection of our national interests. Accordingly, these were secondary peoples, secondary nations who guaranteed our security. My views, however, are completely different. We should have begun to create normal civilized relations with all of our neighbors, including Hungary, a long time ago. I unanimously condemned the intervention in 1956, just as the events of 1968 in Czechoslovakia, or the other actions in which force was used. Differences of opinions, serious differences of views, thus exist. How could one have prevented, for instance, the reunification of the Germans? These are elementary issues, and these have not been answered. I know what is on their minds in the meantime: tanks, tanks, armored vehicles, to get them started toward Europe, and that is that. Yet that would be the beginning of a third world war.

[Correspondent] Yes, but this foreign policy, which we also regard as absolutely right, you pursued shoulder to shoulder with Gorbachev. However, now it seems that you and Gorbachev are going in separate ways. Recently he has been making concessions to the military-industrial complex. This can be seen very clearly in Gorbachev's behaviour. Can you see such changes in Gorbachev?

[Shevardnadze] For the moment I have not drawn such a conclusion. Not at the moment. When dealing with the caliber of a politician such as Gorbachev, in order to draw a conclusion, to claim that he has changed his guiding direction, or that he has chosen another direction, everything has to be thoroughly examined and analyzed, and this includes both the domestic political situation and the external factors. I have not reached this conclusion yet.

[Correspondent] Many people say Gorbachev has started an extremely long game of chess, and in the end he will turn over the ideas of the military-industrial complex. Perhaps this is the right evaluation?

[Shevardnadze] It is possible. However, I still believe Gorbachev made his choice in 1985. If he leaves this path then, I think, he as a politician, as a revolutionist—for I would call him so—will simply die.

[Correspondent] You were also a firm personal friend of Gorbachev? Has this personal contact remained between you?

[Shevardnadze] Our relationship is alright, not too frequent though.

[Correspondent] Do you exchange views on political issues?

[Shevardnadze] Very rarely since my departure. After my resignation I was still a minister for a while. Then we met almost every day. But as I left...[changes thought] you also know how overburdened he is, and I am also busy with my work. I would like to organize this company, and I also traveled to Italy.

[Correspondent] Do you inform Gorbachev about things like your conversations with the pope or others?

[Shevardnadze] I will see. I have not briefed him yet, but I did before my departure. Then we had discussions, which is natural since he is the head of state; all that happened in Rome, and this was not the only meeting; there were some other very interesting conversations with President Andreotti, politicians, the press, the television. I returned home with great impressions. Thus, I have the ground to express some of my ideas on how we should vitalize our European policy.

[Correspondent] Your former subordinate, Bessmertnykh, ambassador in Washington, has become foreign minister. Do you trust your successor?

[Shevardnadze] I think he was the right choice. I also said this officially. He is a genuine, highly trained professional. We indeed worked together on U.S. issues. He is an informal man with a high intellectual horizon who can create good relations. In one word, I think the choice was right.

Khasbulatov Praises Gorbachev, Slams Pavlov

PM2203164591 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 21 Mar 91 Second Edition p 4

[Reprint of interview with R. Khasbulatov, first deputy chairman of the Rusian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic Supreme Soviet, by Italian magazine MONDO ECONOMICO; place and date not given; carried under the rubric "Our Own About Us": "Opinion for Export"]

[Text] The magazine MONDO ECONOMICO (Italy) has published an interview with R. Khasbulatov, first deputy chairman of the RSFSR [Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic] Supreme Soviet.

Question: At his 19 February press conference, Boris Yeltsin called on Gorbachev to resign. What is the alternative to Gorbachev?

Answer: I am sincerely convinced that there is no real alternative to Gorbachev. I merely propose that the president take more account of the republics' demands, accelerate the economic transformations that are already under way, and not abandon democratic renewal. All the more so as this is just what the republics expect. Russia, the Ukraine, Belorussia, and Kazakhstan, together with many other republics, will not abandon the implementation of the serious and profound processes of economic and political renewal. As deputy chairman of the Russian Parliament I can state with all sincerity that Gorbachev intends to be a serious leader and that he does not want to lag behind the pace of transformations. However, he must create conditions which allow the republics to implement these transformations—specifically in order to ensure political stability. The sooner we can feel economic prosperity and well-being on the way, the calmer our partners will be.

Question: What is your opinion of the first steps taken by Union premier Valentin Pavlov?

Answer: The Pavlov cabinet's first steps have been retrograde. The Union government is clearly lagging behind events and has still failed to publish its program. So far we have only seen the exchange of bank notes, which, in my opinion, was simply ridiculous. If the announced price rises are not accompanied by a package of courageous economic measures, they will not have any effect. We need to tackle overall economic stabilization, to implement financial and banking reform, and simultaneously to accelerate and expand privatization. We cannot live solely under the conditions of state ownership. At the same time, we need to encourage foreign investment and create joint stock companies and stock markets. Finally, we need to reform our pricing system.

Question: You are a proponent of privatization. When, in your opinion, will it be possible to implement it in full?

Answer: In Russia the process is already under way. Although the special law on privatization, which we are preparing very seriously and thoughtfully, has not yet been adopted. The draft has already been ratified by parliamentary commissions and is currently before the Supreme Soviet. Needless to say, we approve this law. That is why in the next few months the privatization process in Russia will make itself felt. Privatization will be introduced in trade, construction, agriculture, and industry. Small and medium industrial enterprises will be privatized.

Question: What about guarantees for foreign investment?

Answer: Russia will probably guarantee such investment. In the very near future laws will be promulgated in line with existing international norms. In the sixties Russian enterprises failed to maintain relations with foreign enterprises, and they have still essentially not opened up.

Union Protests Firing of TSN Journalists

LD2503113891 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1100 GMT 25 Mar 91

[Text] We have just received the following document at our editorial office. I will read its contents in full.

The USSR Union of Journalists, in accordance with the Law of the USSR on the Press and Mass Information Media, demands that the questions of removing the TSN [Television News Service] announcers and journalists from the air and of discrimination against our other colleagues in the former USSR Gosteleradio [State Committee for Television and Radio Broadcasting] be revised immediately and fundamentally. The document is signed by journalists of All-Union Radio and members of the USSR Union of Journalists. There are 46 signatures in all.

Radio-Television Official Discusses 'Vzglyad'

LD2203174191 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1655 GMT 22 Mar 91

[By TASS correspondent Veronika Romanenkova]

[Text] Moscow, 22 Mar (TASS)—A news conference was held here today by Valentin Lazutkin, deputy chairman of the All-Union State Television and Radio Broadcasting Company, and other members of its staff, who answered numerous questions concerning the problems of Central Television. Many of them were devoted to the fate of the popular programs "Vzglyad", which has been off the air for several months already, and the "Television News Service (TSN)", which recently replaced its announcers, to whom viewers had taken a liking.

"As far as 'Vzglyad' is concerned, its creative team is now acquiring new forces to make the program more interesting and dynamic," Valentin Lazutkin said. "The announcers of 'TSN', a program which adheres to left-wing positions, have not been dismissed from their jobs for 'political reasons', but discharged from hosting programs."

The All-Union State Television and Radio Braodcasting Company, in accordance with the decree of the USSR president of 8 February 1991, replaced the previously existing State Committee for Television and Radio Broadcasting. Time will tell whether this change is a screen [vyveska], Valentin Lazutkin thinks. However, he continued, we are trying to build our work in a new way, proceeding from the current situation in the country and the conditions of the market economy. Nevertheless, the representative of the company noted, the organizations's main resources will be formed from the state budget, that is to say, arise from various tax revenues. Revenue from advertisements also is used but its share of television's three billion budget is very insignificant, he stressed.

Another important aspect of the company's activity is the mutual relations between the republican studios. In the words of Valentin Lazutkin, the programs prepared by the national television studios, including those of the Russian television which is being set up now, will go out on the Second All-Union Channel. That is the only method of exchanging information between the republics, he added.

Fate of 'TSN,' 'Vzglyad' Programs Reported

91UN1150A Moscow ARGUMENTY I FAKTY in Russian No 12, Mar 91 p 8

[Interview with the anchors of television programs 'TSN' and 'Vzglyad' by ARGUMENTY I FAKTY correspondent A. Binev; place and date not given]

[Text] *The editors are getting telephone calls and letters with worried questions: "We are now in a total television vacuum. The 'Vremya' program is tendentious and not interesting. What happened this time with 'TSN'; where did its anchors go, and why is nothing heard about the 'Vzglyad' program?"*

Our correspondent A. Binev called again on the anchors of Central Television's most popular programs.

"TSN" anchor YU. ROSTOV: It all started last week, on Monday. I refused to be an anchor for that issue because 80 percent of the material had been "censored." Then on Friday, O. Kakuchaya, chief editor of the Main Information Desk, summoned "TSN" chief V. Tishkin and said that by L. Kravchenko's order our entire creative group was taken off the air. There are no staff employees on television now because a company is in the process of being formed. As of now, the company has only one employee: L. Kravchenko. The rest are supposed to sign contracts. It was indicated to us, though, that our contracts will not be signed.

Some time ago Kravchenko said that internal affairs of his organization are not to be discussed in the press, that is, that his journalists should not give interviews. This is one of the mandatory conditions of working for the company. It is supposed to be stipulated in company employees' individual contracts.

V. TISHKIN, "TSN" chief: The program Rostov is talking about—the one that had been 80-percent "castrated"—included such segments as the miners' strike, and events in Yugoslavia, where one of demonstrators' demands was the replacement of the leadership on television because of lack of objectivity in presenting information. Then about Yeltsin's replies to telephone calls (KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA materials). The was nothing "seditious" in this program.

YU. ROSTOV: Most likely, the goal was to create a provocation. Just an excuse. Last Sunday the program was presented by journalists from another team, and on Monday they also refused to go on air. We were told that Tishkin is no longer the department chief. He had been replaced by O. Maksimenko, who has just returned from France. Because all anchors had refused to participate, he had to go on air himself. In general, ever since they introduced "chief duty officers" on our staff after the Lithuanian events (we call them censors), journalists are being selected accordingly. However, the main blow is not just against us, the anchors, but against the entire "TSN" creative group.

On Thursday, at the request of the leadership, I wrote an explanation memo in regard to my refusal to go on the air on Monday. Among other things, I asked to conduct an inquiry as to what degree the activities of "censors," whom I identified by name, corresponded to the president's course on glasnost, since their zeal borders on the absurd. Next day we were taken off the air. This happened on the eve of the referendum which we intended to report on from all angles, as any event requires. Materials on the referendum that we had already tried to present had all been censored out entirely.

V. TISHKIN: We have our own plans, and we intend to take some steps. But we feel that it is premature to talk about them.

"Vzglyad," "ViD" chief A. SHIPILOV: This program was aired on Friday, but only through Orbita-1 system, that is, for the Far East. We had not even displayed the

"Vzglyad" logo. When the time came to air it for the European part, the program was canceled by Kravchenko's order. We did this program together with KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA political commentator **A. AFANASYEV**. The material for the program was shot in Italy, at the writers' conference, among the participants were many well-known writers—Zalygin, Bykov, Soloukhin, Strelyaniy, Bukovskiy, etc., including many people who do not share the position of the Central Television leadership. Kravchenko also did not like the question we asked of Muscovites on the streets: "Are we a great nation?"

A. AFANASYEV: I called Kravchenko and asked him about it. He said that, first, he did not like Soloukhin's participation, and some others as well. That is despite the fact that we were striving to find points of contact between people with diametrically different views. By the way, the president sent his greetings to this conference in Rome. Kravchenko must have known about it. So, does he really "carry out the president's will," as he has stated so many times? Second, he was wondering: Would somebody dare to ask this question in the United States? He probably does not know—or perhaps does not want to know—that once, having asked themselves this question, the Americans pulled themselves out of the "Great Depression" and the moral crisis in which they found themselves at that time.

I have failed, however, to convince the chairman of the company...

Economic

Gorbachev Decree on Compensation for Savings

LD2303225791 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 1800 GMT 23 Mar 91

[From the "Vremya" newscast]

[Text] The president of the USSR has adopted a decree aimed at compensating the population for losses from the depreciation of savings in connection with the once-only increase in retail prices. In it he decreed:

1. to adopt the proposal by the USSR Cabinet of Ministers and the USSR State Bank on a single re-evaluation of the monetary resourcs of the population in deposits with the USSR State Bank and the USSR Savings Bank as well as those invested in certificates of the USSR Savings Bank, USSR state treasury bills, and in bonds for the 1982 state internal preferential loan. Proceeding from the basic special purpose trends in the population's use of its savings, and taking into account the price index for individual types of goods and services, to—on a single occasion—bring about an increase in the amount of savings by 40 percent on the balances of deposits or on the nominal cost of securities.

2. Compensation payments will be granted on all types of deposits held, proceeding from their balance on 1 March 1991, in accordance with a procedure set out by the USSR State Bank and the USSR Savings Bank. Where the total of compensation payments is up to 200 rubles inclusive, the balance on deposits—with the right to use these sums—is to be increased after 1 July 1991. Where the totals for the re-evaluation of deposits exceed 200 rubles, they are to be transferred to special accounts with depositors gaining the right to use these funds once three years have expired. Income is to be paid on funds in special accounts proceeding from the current rate of seven percent a year.

3. The USSR State Bank and the USSR Savings Bank are to set out the procedure for the use of funds transferred to special accounts, by citizens in individual cases before the three-year time period expires, to pay for expensive goods by non-cash means and to acquire accommodation.

4. The payment of compensation to citizens for certificates from the USSR Savings Bank and for USSR state treasury bills acquired before 1 March 1991 will be carried out when the time period for which they were sold expires, or after 1 March 1994.

5. The USSR Ministry of Finance, the USSR State Bank, and the USSR Savings Bank are to set out the procedure for the sale and purchase of bonds for the 1982 state internal preferential loan, taking into account the increase in their nominal value by 40 percent and for the payment of compensation to the owners of bonds for 1990 state special-purpose interest-free loans in 1993 if the owners of the bonds refuse goods.

6. To revoke the restriction on the withdrawal of cash from citizens' deposits set out in the decree by the USSR President of 22 January 1991 on the cessation of the acceptance for payment of USSR State Bank bank notes of 50- and 100-ruble denominations, issued in 1961 and on the restriction of the withdrawal of cash from citizens' deposits.

Those were decrees by the USSR president, the full texts of which you may familiarize yourselves with in the press.

Gorbachev Decree on Taxation Measures

LD2303192191 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 1800 GMT 23 Mar 91

[From the "Vremya" newscast]

[Text] USSR President Mikhail Sergeyevich Gorbachev has issued a decree instituting a temporary arrangement for levying taxes on enterprises, associations, organizations, and citizens.

Because of the retail prices reform, and as an exception to Articles 4 and 21 of the USSR Law on the Taxation of Enterprises, Associations, and Organizations of 14 June 1990; Paragraph Seven of the USSR Supreme Soviet resolution of 14 June 1990 on the arrangements for introducing the aforementioned law; Articles 4, 8, 14, 17, and 20 of the USSR Law on Taxation of the Incomes of USSR Citizens, Foreign Citizens, and Persons Without Citizenship of 23 April 1990; Articles 1 and 2 of the USSR Law on the Staged Abolition of the Taxes on Bachelors, Single People, and USSR Citizens With Small Families of 23 April 1990; and in advance of the changes to the aforementioned legislation to be introduced by the USSR Supreme Soviet, the USSR president decrees:

1. that the maximum rate of tax on the profits of enterprises, associations, and organizations is to be reduced from 45 percent to 35 percent of the taxable profit, with 17 percent of the tax revenue going to the Union budget and 18 percent to republican and local budgets, except for in those cases when, in accordance with current USSR legislation, the profit tax goes entirely to the local budgets;

2. that the maximum level of the average monthly salaries of workers engaged in the basic work of an enterprise, or in a section that deals with the prime cost of the output, work, and services, be raised to 480 rubles when assessing the taxable profit in 1991;

3. that when collective farms—including fish farms—calculate the tax on the fund for the wages of collective farmers, the untaxed size of this fund is to be calculated on the basis of 160 rubles per month for each collective farmer working on the farm;

4. that the wages and other forms of monetary recompense for blue-and white-collar workers and citizens equivalent to them in tax terms of up to 160 rubles per month should not be subject to income tax when received at their main workplace, service base, or place of study.

The decree sets specific scales for the levying of taxes.

Pechora Coal Basin Miners' Strike Continues

LD2303205791 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1900 GMT 23 Mar 91

[By TASS correspondent Viktor Makarov]

[Text] Vorkuta (Komi Soviet Socialist Republic), 23 Mar (TASS)—Miners of the Pechora coal field continue to insist on direct talks with Valentin Pavlov, USSR prime minister. Ten out of 13 mines in the polar town of Vorkuta are still taking part in the strike, and five mines have stopped their work completely. About 300,000 tonnes of coal have not been extracted here in March, and nearly 200,000 tonnes of coal have not been delivered to consumers. The entire losses have amounted to nine million rubles.

All five mines of the "Intaugol" concern and the mine building administration are on strike in the town of Inta.

The TASS correspondent was told in the "Vorkutaugol" association that Boris Yeltsin, chairman of the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic [RSFSR] Supreme Soviet, sent a telegram to Vorkuta today. It contains a request to load coking coal to the Cherepovetsk metallurgical combine, in order to prevent the stoppage of machine-building plants and the disruption of the program for the improvement of the RSFSR economy. This telegram is being currently discussed by miners.

Yuriy Skokov, first deputy chairman of the RSFSR Council of Ministers, arrived in Vorkuta today. One of the main aims of his visit is to discuss on the spot the problems of managing the fuel and power complex in particular, and the issue of the transfer of the Pechora coal field from Union subordination to RSFSR jurisdiction.

Kuzbass Miners Threaten 'General Warning Strike'

LD2203150491 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1300 GMT 22 Mar 91

[Text] A Bolshevik mine strike committee representative in the Kuzbass read an appeal by the interregional strike committee of miners at a USSR union of labor collectives conference in Moscow today. It contains a political demand for the Union leadership to resign. After a discussion a resolution was adopted to hold a general warning strike in the USSR in the near future.

Miners' Hunger Strike Continues in Moscow

LD2203141291 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1200 GMT 22 Mar 91

[Text] The political hunger strike by a delegation of Kuzbass miners continues at the Rossiya Hotel. The country's president has refused to meet them. Perhaps in the near future, Bella Denisenko, Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic people's deputy from Kuzbass, will stop the hunger strike since her condition is the worst. In fact, she is already unable to leave her bed. Meanwhile, the Council of Workers' Committees of Novokuznetsk called on the deputies to stop their hunger strike in Moscow. The council believes that strike is a more powerful means for making the center comply with the miners' demands. A decision has been adopted to continue with the political strike until all the demands are satisfied, and also to send delegations to non-striking coal enterprises in order to call on miners to support the strike.

Yanayev Denies Pledge to Striking Miners

PM2203160291 Moscow KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA in Russian 22 Mar 91 p 1

[I. Kadulin report: "Vile Insinuation"]

[Text] I was very reluctant to believe in the report, but nonetheless it said in black and white in LITERATURNAYA GAZETA (No. 11, March 1991):

"At the end of February miners' representatives came to Moscow themselves and secured a meeting with USSR Vice President Gennadiy Yanayev. The second man in the state, according to Viktor Kolesnikov, chairman of the Vorkuta strike committee, said: 'If I don't give you an answer on the USSR Government's readiness to sign a general standard tariff agreement by 26 February (this year), you can call me a goat.'

"He did not give an answer in time.

"And the miners decided to strike."

It goes without saying that in a conversation with overheated miners anything is possible... But the vice president himself... Surely the newspaper was a bit early for April Fools' Day this year, which is, as you know, the year of the goat.

We decided to check the report. We were unable to talk with Comrade Yanayev personally, but contacted him through an aide. The aide relayed the vice president's words. "I said nothing of the kind, and I regard it as a vile insinuation."

Gennadiy Yanayev cited Mikhail Shchadov, minister of the coal industry, as a witness to the conversation in question. He, in turn, confirmed to us: "I was at the meeting, but I don't remember anything like that." And moreover, as the minister stressed, such vocabulary is not characteristic of the vice president.

Ukraine's Kravchuk Asks Miners To End Strike

LD2203174691 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1313 GMT 22 Mar 91

[By UKRINFORM-TASS correspondnet Aleksey Petrunya]

[Text] Kiev, 22 Mar— Ukrainian Supreme Soviet Chairman Leonid Kravchuk has asked the republic's miners to stop the strike. He issued this call at today's sitting of the republic's legislature.

A number of Ukrainian mines have been on strike since 1 March. The miners came out with political and economic demands. In part, they insist that their wages be increased 2 to 2.5 times. Yesterday, Vitold Fokin, chairman of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic Council of Ministers, met with representatives of miners' collectives. The deputies were briefed on the results of the talks. It was noted that, at present, 55 mines are involved in the strike. Ukraine's economy has already lost nearly 2 million tons of coal. A catastrophic situation has come about within the coke industry, and consequently, within the republic's metallurgy as a whole. The miners have stated that they will end the strike only if reassurances are given that their demands will be met. In its turn, the government has promised that, although there is a gap in the republic's budget, it will do everything possible to assist in improving the miners' situation.

The session was addressed by representatives of miners' collectives who expressed various opinions on the strike, including those of openly irreconcilable character (to continue the strike until the victorious end) and also moderate ones to the effect that if in the republic's present-day economic situation the strike cannot be halted altogether, then it should at least be stopped for the time being.

Reviewing the results of the discussion, Leonid Kravchuk stressed that one cannot vote for the sovereignty of the Ukraine and at the same time force the repubic to its knees, thus creating a difficult economic situation. All economic questions must be decided by the government and Supreme Soviet of the Ukraine, without asking the all-Union government to provide assistance.

Oblast Court Declares Miners' Strike Illegal

LD2303171191 Moscow Central Television Vostok Program and Orbita Networks in Russian 1530 GMT 23 Mar 91

[Text] The Dnepropetrovsk Oblast court has declared the strike by the Pavlogradugol association illegal. The miners will now have to pay a huge fine from their own pockets.

The administration of Western Belkovskiy mines near Moscow has also applied to a court to have the strike declared illegal.

Miners, Associates Call for Rallies 27 Mar

PM2203164191 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 23 Mar 91 Union Edition p 1

[Own information report under the general heading "Chain Reaction of Strikes"]

[Text] Moscow—The USSR Federation of Mining and Metallurgical Industry Workers' Trade Unions has appealed to working people in the sector to stage an action on 27 March in defense of the vital interests of miners and metallurgical workers and against the reduction in their living standards. This action does not mean a work stoppage: It is merely a question of holding rallies and meetings of working people, at which collectives will be briefed on the demands put before the government. One of these is for pay to be doubled. The editorial office has been informed by the "Soyuzmetall" Trade Union Center (that is another name for the federation) that all demands are supported by socioeconomic calculations.

Urals Miners Threaten Indefinite Strike

LD2403144191 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 1200 GMT 24 Mar 91

[Report by coreespondent S.Sergeyev, from the "Television News Service" program]

[Text] The miners of the South Urals have been on strike for two weeks now. Over this time, losses have amounted to over 30,000 tonnes of coal. The enterprises' coal debt and losses are growing.

[Begin recording] [Sergeyev] What made you resort to such an extreme measure as a strike?

[I.A. Burakov, mining shift leader] Well, the low standard of living and the poor wages. We are in solidarity with all the miners.

[F.G. Yegorov] First, today we are saying no to the policy of our president with regard to the fact that we are saying a lot but are doing too little for the people. Further, our demands also include that demands be put forward of no confidence in Deputy Isayev, a deputy of the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic Supreme Soviet. Also, that Chelyabinsk oblast be recognized as an ecological disaster zone. Our demand is for the introduction of a Ural coefficient of one quarter more than the norm, and not just for us, but for the working people of the entire South Urals.

[Sergeyev] Representatives of labor collectives, members of the strike committees, and trade union committees of mines assembled in the South Urals Association. It was decided to elaborate the united demands of miners in the South Urals to the government of the country, and to send petition bearers to Moscow who should secure a meeting with Prime Minister Pavlov and put these demands to him. There will be an indefinite strike in the event of rejection. Although many of course realize that this measure will hardly help to resolve the numerous social and economic problems in the mining collectives. It is more likely to exacerbate them. [end recording]

RSFSR Union Urges Talks on Miners' Strike

LD2403091791 Moscow All-Union Radio First Program Radio-1 Network in Russian 0500 GMT 24 Mar 91

[Text] The growing wave of the miners' strike movement, with which many collectives of workers in the metal, oil, energy and other branches have already expressed solidarity, is leading to the further destruction of the country's national economy and a worsening in the situation of working people. These words are from an open letter by the Presidium of the Federation Council of the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic independent unions.

Delay in tackling the issues raised by the miners, in the opinion of the Presidium of the Federation Council of the Russian independent unions, is forcing the situation into a dead end and raising social tension to a critical level. Only a constitutional path is possible in solving political problems. As regards the social and economic demands of the miners, we urgently ask USSR President Gorbachev and Prime Minister Pavlov to immediately begin talks with a delegation of representatives of the country's coal mining areas. At the same time, at the start of these talks the coordinating council of strike committees could halt the strike and stop it if there is constructive advance toward agreement, the open letter says.

Trade Union Federation Appeals to Gorbachev

LD2303210191 Moscow All-Union Radio Mayak Network in Russian 1900 GMT 23 Mar 91

[Text] The Presidium of the Council of the Federation of the Rusian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic Independent Trade Unions has sent an open letter to the USSR president, the country's prime minister, USSR people's deputies, strike committees of coal fields, the independent trade union of mine workers, and all trade union bodies and trade union members. The letter contains a persistent request addressed to the USSR president and the country's prime minister that negotiations with the delegation of representatives of the country's coal mining regions be started without delay. At the same time it is proposed that the strike be suspended for the time of the talks.

Coal Minister Sends Message to Managers, Others

LD2203111491 Moscow All-Union Radio Mayak Network in Russian 1000 GMT 22 Mar 91

[Text] A TASS correspondent has reported that USSR coal industry minister Shchadov, in a telegram sent to the managers of associations, combines, enterprises, territorial committees, and trade union committees, noted that (among their strike demands) individual labor collectives are raising the question of the fulfillment of the 3 August 1989 decision No. 608 of the USSR Council of Ministers.

Shchadov also reported that the USSR prime minister instructed him to report to the government on the fulfillment of the decision. The report on this, which is being prepared, will be examined by the USSR Council of Ministers with the participation of representatives of the labor collectives of the country's coal regions after the work of the industry's coal enterprises has been stabilized.

At the same time the minister noted that the miners again demanded that at the meeting of the USSR Cabinet of Ministers no demands of a political nature will be examined.

Coal Minister Views Consequences of Strikes

LD2403181691 Moscow Central Television Vostok Program and Orbita Networks in Russian 1530 GMT 24 Mar 91

[Interview with M.I. Shchadov, USSR minister of coal industry, by unidentified correspondent; place and date not given; from the "Vremya" newscast—recorded]

[Text] What awaits the coal industry in the future? Our correspondent has interviewed the USSR minister of the coal industry.

[Begin recording] [Shchadov] To date we have already lost about 3 million tonnes of coal yield, over 250 million rubles in profit. The miners have already lost more than 60 million rubles from the wages fund.

[Correspondent] Look at the chain. At the start there are the metallurgists. Who is there after them?

[Shchadov] After the metallurgists come the machine builders and the construction workers. This is clear. We know today that certain factories producing such machinery, even motor vehicle factories, are in the most serious situation regarding sheet steel for their products. Construction units are experiencing a shortfall in supplies of reinforcement fittings, which it is extremely essential to have today. This is already taking its toll on the generation of heat for workers' settlements and for the towns.

I will tell you bluntly that in certain towns there are sufficient reserves for only a few hours. Many mines are on the road to disaster. This will lead to closure of the mines. They will lead themselves there, because it will be impossible to work without metal, without sufficient electrical power at the pits. Every day there are stoppages. It is becoming more and more difficult to resume normal operations. At many enterprises an extremely serious situation is developing. The Raspadskaya, one of the largest mines in the Soviet Union, a mine on leasehold, is losing more than a million rubles a day. The director at this mine put it bluntly. He said: I should resign, because I cannot see any way out of the current situation. There are no funds to pay for equipment and materials, and tomorrow we will face paying wages along with the compensation for the higher prices. I think that in the next few days certain mines will be declared bankrupt.

The ministry cannot look at political demands. There is one set of demands in the Kuzbass. In the Ukraine they want a new constitution to be drawn up and adopted. In other regions they have other demands, such as quick conclusion of a Union treaty. These demands of a political nature should be looked at and addressed somewhere else. The economic demands that have been made by the miners, in particular regarding Resolution 608, we will look at. We will try to find a solution for them. [end recording]

Minister Notes Effects of Coal Shortages

LD2403213591 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 1800 GMT 24 Mar 91

[Interview with Ferrous Metallurgy Minister Serafim Vasilyevich Kolpakov by correspondent A. Kraminov; place and date not given; from the "Vremya" newscast—recorded]

[Text] [Kolpakov] Metallurgical workers have been undersupplied 3 million tonnes of coking coal since the beginning of the year. The situation is deteriorating every day. This has led to the stoppage at coke-oven batteries, secondary coking plants in general, and secondary coking production of metallurgical combines. As a result, this has led to the stoppage at blast furnaces and the entire complex of metallurgical production that follows. There has been a sharp deterioration in providing supplies to working people's apartments in a number of towns in connection with production cuts or stoppages.

Take the nickel combine in Orsk in the southern Urals, for example. The settlement there is practically freezing because the only heat they are getting comes from the functioning capacities of the metallurgical plant. There is no industry that does not require metal. The machine-building industry is coming to a standstill. Other production is also coming to a standstill. We, metallurgical workers, used to try to produce more metal for agricultural machine-building every spring in order to produce spares to be supplied to rural areas directly. All this is currently undergoing sharp cuts. Apart from supplying metal, the coke from coking coal is used to produce chemical products, mineral fertilizers, washing powders, soda, and a whole range of other products required by the national economy, including sugar.

[Kraminov] There is a kind of war of ultimatums to all appearances. The premier says he will start negotiations only after miners resume work, and miners say they will resume work only if the premier starts negotiations. Is there any sense at all in the present situation, in this current struggle of principles?

[Kolpakov] One must approach the country's current situation in a realistic manner. Our esteemed miners should be aware of the situation in the country and resume work now instead of exacerbating the situation, which is already extremely acute, render assistance in raising the economy and then, of course, return to the questions that are worrying miners at present.

'Forces Among Miners' Seek Strike's End

LD2303194291 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1300 GMT 23 Mar 91

[Excerpts] Various state officials are trying to prevent the miners' strike from spreading to new regions. [passage omitted]

Judging by yesterday's television meeting between commentator Aleksandr Krutov and representatives of mine work forces, there are forces among the miners which are insisting on an end to the strike and a reaffirmation of confidence in the central government. The miners who were picked to appear on screen said the main consequence of the strikes would be to bring heavy industry to a standstill. Prime Minister Pavlov said the same. The same message appears in television reports on the "Vremya" program. In my view, the central authorities will do their utmost to promote confrontation between mining work forces and workers employed by the enterprises which are the main customers for coal.

National Economy 'Sliding' Due to Strike

LD2303173191 Moscow Central Television Vostok Program and Orbita Networks in Russian 1530 GMT 23 Mar 91

[From the "Vremya" newscast]

[Text] And now the miners' strike: Unfortunately, the situation is not getting any better. I will give you a few facts. In the Kuzbass, 46 coal-extracting enterprises are on strike. In Chelyabinsk Oblast, several mines of (Kopeysk) and (Korkin) have already ceased production or are on the brink of doing so. Meanwhile, of the five furnaces of the production association Ufaleynikel, four have been stopped for lack of coke. Output of nickel has fallen to 20 percent and the hydro-metallurgical shop is at a standstill. Since these furnaces are used to heat the settlement, the temperature in the nickel workers' apartments is down to below 10 degrees. In the next few nights, colder weather has been forecast there.

In the Ukraine, the collectives of 55 mines are on strike. The leadership of the republic has met with representatives of the strikers, and after lengthy negotiations appear to have found an acceptable way out of the crisis; but they have not managed to agree on all points.

In Kazakhstan, thank God, the situation is settling down. Kazakhstan President Nazarbayev has found common ground with the strikers.

Meanwhile, as miners stick to their demands, our economy is sliding further and further into the pit. The metallurgical works are ceasing to operate, as are the coke and chemical enterprises. Railway transport is idling, and in the countryside they are anxiously waiting for the machinery needed for sowing, but there's no sign of it. There is no metal, either. For in this world we are all connected, and the stoppage of one brings the idling of another and the suffering of a third; and so the chain reaction goes on and our life gets worse and worse—for all, without exception. For example, the rural dwellers of Altay have failed to receive 10,000 tonnes of Kuznetsk coal, and they are now saying that if the situation does not improve, they will be forced to stop supplying food to Kuzbass. The coal debt is growing; the losses of the enterprises are growing; and the decline of production continues.

Miners' Strike 'Worrying,' Threatens Economy

LD2303185291 Moscow All-Union Radio First Program Radio-1 Network in Russian 1600 GMT 23 Mar 91

[Text] Worrying news is coming in from the mining regions where the strike continues, correspondent Gennadiy Kandaurov reports from Donetsk:

The strike continues today at 52 mines and mine directorates. A meeting ended in Donetsk, in the square before the building which houses the oblast party committee, a meeting of strike participants from various towns and mining settlements of Donbass. It was a very, very stormy meeting. Many miners spoke at this meeting, first and foremost about their economic demands. I would like to remind you what they are: the enhancement of wages, pension demands, and privileges to the miners who have worked underground for 25 years. The meeting stressed the need to conclude, as soon as possible, a general tariff agreement between the government and the miners which would sort out this complex of miners' social problems.

These economic demands are already undergoing changes. A demand has already been brought in on adopting a law on indexing wages in relation to price increases. This is a problem that interests many people, which is why many villagers participated. Serious political demands were added today. Much was spoken of them at the meeting today, in particular: the demand for the president's resignation; the depolitization of state structures, including television and radio; and the demand for recognition of the constitutional character of the sovereignty of republics.

Generally speaking, in my opinion, the strike is spreading, and it will bring serious consequences to our country's economy.

The Kuzbass strike also continues, with the mining enterprises not operating. Consumers will not receive over 2,000 carloads of fuel today. The coke byproduct production of the Kuznetsk metallurgic combine has raw material only for one day. The Kemerov coke byproduct plant is in a desperate situation. The working collectives of these enterprises appeal to the miners to show reason and to understand that if the coke batteries are destroyed, it will take scores of years to restore them.

Many disturbing signals are also coming in from Altay. Rural dwellers there have not received 10,000 tons of the Kuznetsk coal. If the situation does not change for the better, they will have to resort to halting the food supply to Kuzbass.

Miners' Strike Sinks Nation Into 'Abyss'

LD2503004191 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 1800 GMT 23 Mar 91

[From the "Vremya" newscast]

[Text] As long as the miners insist upon having their own way, the economy, unfortunately, is deteriorating, not only in the towns, not only in an individual town, but throughout the whole country it is slipping further and further into the abyss. Metallurgical works and coking and chemical enterprises are coming to a halt, and rail transport is idle. In the countryside, they are waiting for equipment; outside, it's the sowing campaign, and there isn't any equipment because there isn't any metal. That is how the halting of one thing leads to the standing idle of another and the suffering of a third. Like a chain reaction, our life becomes ever worse, and it becomes worse for everyone, without exception. For example, the rural inhabitants of altay have failed to receive 10,000 tonnes of coal, of Kuznetsk coal, and they now say that if the situation doesn't change, they will be forced to stop deliveries of food to the Kuzbass. The coal indebtedness grows; the losses of the enterprises grow; the recession in production continues. According to yet another piece of news, the Novolipetsk Metallurgical Combine, one of the biggest ones in Europe, is on the brink of being brought completely to a halt.

[Begin recording] [Correspondent Ye. Yermachenkov] Always, there have been trains standing here, laden with coal. The strike by the country's miners has literally emptied the approach trucks of the combine. They now receive one-sixth of the number of cars needed for normal operations every 24 hours. The Donbass has stopped loading supplies completely, and the already miserable starvation rations on which the metallurgical workers have been put by the country's miners melt away every 24 hours. The delivery shortfalls amount to tens of thousands of tonnes. The nonspecialist can see in what this could result. Two blast furnaces out of six have already been shut down; one convertor is not working. If deliveries from the coal-producing basins do not rise to at least half of the norm, all eight batteries will begin to destroy themselves in a week. A plan to stop all eight blast furnaces has been worked out at the Novolipetsk Metallurgical Combine.

[V.Ya. Kuznetsov, coking and chemical production specialist] We understand very well, indeed, how difficult the labor of the miner is, but understand us, the labor of the metallurgical worker is very difficult, too. It is very dangerous and very harmful, as well. But, you have faced us with conditions in which we today, having cut production, are stopping metallurgical units; we are stopping the TET's [expansion unknown]; we are stopping the supply of water to the urban settlements. This means that people are being left without heat, their social conditions are getting worse, and people are ceasing to receive wages. Already today—and it will be all the more so tomorrow—there is nothing with which to feed families. Therefore, understand that these are not simply words; this is the voice of reason.

[I.V. Frantsenyuk, general director of the Novolipetsk Metallurgical Combine] Esteemed miners and pitmen! The metallurgical workers appeal to you to stop the strikes, otherwise it will be the destruction of the whole of the national economy, the destruction of the basic capital of a most important industry. One's heart bleeds when these powerful modern units, these blast furnaces, converters, rolling mills, stand idle. If you don't stop the strike, the whole of the economy will be destroyed. It is time to end the destruction. [end recording]

[Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian at 1300 GMT on 24 March, during its regularly scheduled newscast, broadcasts a 2.5-minute report criticizing "Vremya's" coverage of the strike. The report includes comments by Valeriy Menshikov, Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic people's deputy for Lipetskaya Oblast, who contests the 23 March "Vremya" report, pointing out that the Novolipetsk Metallurgical Combine has 117,000 tonnes of coal in stock to last eight days, coal continues to arrive by truck from Karaganda and Vorkuta, and the two Novolipetsk TET stations are not under threat of being shut down since both are powered by oil and gas and not by coal. Menshikov says he believes "Vremya" is trying to exacerbate the situation. The unidentified Radio Rossii announcer ends the report by saying: "Clearly, not everything shown on the 'Vremya' program can be believed. Maybe the center is stirring up the situation to force the miners to return to work before their demands are met."]

Press Account of Miners' 19 Mar News Conference

PM2103154191 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 21 Mar 91 Union Edition p 3

[I. Demchenko report: "No Faith in the Government"]

[Text] There are 165 mines which are not working in the country today. Some 280,000-300,000 miners are taking part in the strike. These figures were given at a news conference organized 19 March by the coordinating committee of the country's strike committees and the executive bureau of the independent trade union of miners.

The demands advanced in the name of miners by the interregional coordination council of workers (strike) committees include the dissolution of the Congress of USSR People's Deputies as not having justified the people's trust, the resignation of the union government and the USSR president, and the transfer of power to the Federation Council and to the Supreme Soviets and governments of the sovereign republics. Representatives of the mining regions stated at the news conference that the strike, which began with economic demands, had been compelled to turn to political demands. Miners are convinced that the present USSR Government is incapable of fulfilling their just demands even if it wanted to do so, since it is constrained by outdated dogmas.

The methods said to be used against strikers at local level include the severance of telephone connections and the suspension of food shipments. In one mining city in Lugansk Oblast children at school were forced to transcribe a dictation describing their parents as unworthy people.

Asked by a Swedish radio correspondent about his forecast for the continuation of the strike, P. Shushpanov, chairman of the executive bureau of the independent trade union of miners, said that "it would be very difficult." And N. Volynko, member of Donetsk City strike committee, added: "In the opinion of the Ukraine's miners this is the last organized strike. If representatives of the other sectors do not support our demands, we will never get off our knees."

Replying to a question from the U.S. magazine FORTUNE, the representatives of the mining regions stated that they firmly intend to fight to the end for the fulfillment of all their demands. A. Malykhin, a member of the Kuzbass council of workers committees who has been fasting for seven days together with seven of his comrades in pursuit of a meeting with the USSR president, said that their aim is to hand over the miners' demands to M. Gorbachev in person and give him, if need be, the necessary explanations.

East Siberian Gold Miners End Strike

LD2203212591 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 2000 GMT 22 Mar 91

[Text] Six shafts of the (?Darofonskiy) mine, in East Siberia, have resumed extracting gold after two days of strikes. Nevertheless, the miners leave in force all their economic demands of the administration and the local authorities. They decided that, if the demands are not met, then they will resume the strike in one month.

Bank Head Says Securities Value To Increase

LD2103163991

[Editorial Report] Moscow All-Union Radio First Program Radio-1 Network in Russian at 1500 GMT on 21 March broadcasts a three-minute report by correspondent Valeriy Kiosa, who in connection with the many listeners who have been calling over the past few hours with questions as to what will happen with state securities in view of the forthcoming rise in prices, telephones Vladimir Alekseyevich Khorkin, chairman of the USSR Savings Bank Board, and asks him whether as a result their value will not drop.

Khorkin refers to Paragraph 38 of the decision by the USSR Cabinet of Ministers, which says that the USSR Gosbank (State Bank) and the USSR Savings Bank, in agreement with the USSR Council of Ministers, will implement measures to compensate for losses suffered by owners of deposits and certificates as of 1 March 1991, whereas the USSR Finance Ministry will do the same for owners of state securities among the population, in connection with the one-time increase in retail prices.

Kiosa asks Khorkin whether what he says means in practice that in the near future these state securities will simply increase in value, and that those who hand them in now will miss out on that increased value. Khorkin replies in the affirmative.

USSR Currency Law To Take Effect 1 April

914A0536B Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 16 Mar 91 Union Edition p 2

[Decree signed by A. Lukyanov, chairman of the USSR Supreme Soviet, in Moscow, the Kremlin, on 1 March: "Decree of the USSR Supreme Soviet on Implementation of the USSR Law 'On Hard Currency Regulation'"—IZVESTIYA headline]

[Text] The USSR Supreme Soviet decrees:

1. To implement the USSR Law "On Hard Currency Regulation" beginning 1 April 1991.

2. To recognize as invalid beginning 1 April 1991 the presidential law of the USSR Supreme Soviet dated 30 November 1976 "On Transactions with Hard Currency Valuables on the Territory of the USSR."

3. For the USSR Government within one month's time:

to introduce to the USSR Supreme Soviet proposals on bringing existing legislative acts of the USSR into correspondence with the USSR law "On Hard Currency Regulation";

to examine the practice of applying the ukase of the president of the USSR dated 2 November 1990 "On a Special Procedure for Using Hard Currency Resources in 1991" and to introduce to the president of the USSR appropriate proposals for a procedure for implementing that ukase depending on the particular nature of the sectors and the type of export product;

to bring decrees and instructions of the USSR administration into correspondence with the aforementioned law;

to ensure the examination and abolishment by ministries, state committees, and departments of the USSR of their normative acts, including instructions, that contradict the aforementioned law.

4. For the USSR State Bank within one month's time to publish normative acts enforcing the USSR law "On Hard Currency Regulation."

5. To propose that the Supreme Soviet of union and autonomous republics bring the legislation of Union and autonomous republics into correspondence with the USSR Law "On Hard Currency Regulation."

6. Proceeding from the need to further broaden the independence of producers and legal guarantees of their activities under the conditions of a transition to market relations, for the administration of the USSR, in developing the USSR law "On Hard Currency Regulation," to prepare and, within three month's time, introduce for the examination of the USSR Supreme Soviet a draft law on state insurance for the commercial, investment, and hard currency risks of enterprises.

[Signed] A. Lukyanov, chairman of the USSR Supreme Soviet
Moscow, the Kremlin, 1 March 1991.

Text of Hard Currency Law

914A0536A Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 16 Mar 91 Union Edition p 2

[Law signed by M. Gorbachev, president of the USSR, in Moscow, the Kremlin, on 1 March: "USSR Law on Hard Currency Regulation"]

[Text] The present law defines the general principles for carrying out hard currency operations in domestic economic circulation and international payments of the

USSR, the powers and functions of state organs in the regulation of hard currency and the administration of hard currency resources, the rights and obligations of Soviet and foreign citizens and corporate bodies in regard to the possession, use and disposal of hard currency valuables, areas of hard currency control, and responsibility for the violation of hard currency legislation.

The law proceeds from the unity of currency, the currency system, and the currency territory of the USSR, and from delimitation of the jurisdiction of the USSR and subjects of the federation in the sphere of hard currency regulation.

Section I. General Provisions

Article 1. Basic Concepts

The concepts used in the present law designate the following:

1. "Hard currency assets":
   a) foreign currency
   b) securities—negotiable instruments (checks, bills of exchange, letters of credit, etc.) and funded paper (stocks, bonds, etc.) in foreign currency;
   c) precious metals—gold, silver, platinum, and metals of the platinum group (palladium, iridium, rhodium, ruthenium, and osmium) in any form and state with the exception of jewelry and other consumer products from these metals and fragments of such products;
   d) natural precious stones in raw and processed form (uncut diamonds, cut diamonds, rubies, emeralds, sapphires, and pearls) with the exception of jewelry and other consumer products from these metals and fragments of such products.

2. "USSR currency"—rubles in circulation in the form of notes of the USSR State Bank and state treasury notes and coins, including those made of precious metals, as well as capital in rubles in accounts on deposit in USSR banking institutions.

3. "Foreign currency"—foreign monetary notes in the form of bank notes and treasury notes and coins that are in circulation and are legal tender on the territory of the appropriate foreign country as well as those notes that have been withdrawn and are being withdrawn from circulation but are subject to exchange for monetary notes in circulation; funds in the monetary units of foreign states and international accounting units existing in accounts and on deposit in banks.

4. "Residents":
   a) Soviet and foreign citizens and people without citizenship having a permanent place of residence in the USSR, including those temporarily abroad;
   b) corporate bodies located on the territory of the USSR and registered in the USSR, including enterprises with the participation of foreign investments;
   c) Soviet diplomatic, trade, and other official representatives abroad enjoying immunity and diplomatic privileges as well as other representatives of Soviet enterprises and organizations abroad that are not carrying out economic or other commercial activities.

5. "Nonresidents":
   a) Foreign and Soviet citizens and people without citizenship having a permanent place of residence abroad, including those temporarily on the territory of the USSR;
   b) Corporate bodies located abroad and created and operating in accordance with legislation of foreign states, including those with the participation of soviet enterprises and organizations;
   c) Foreign diplomatic, trade, and other official representatives, international organizations (and their branches) that are located on the territory of the USSR and enjoy immunity and diplomatic privileges as well as representatives of other organizations and firms that are not carrying out economic or other commercial activities.

6. "Hard currency operations"—operations connected with:
   a) transfer of the right of ownership of hard currency assets;
   b) use of foreign currency as a means of payment, as well as the use of USSR currency when carrying out foreign economic activities'
   c) taking and sending into the USSR from abroad and taking and sending out of the USSR to foreign countries hard currency assets, as well as the execution of international monetary transfers.

Hard currency operations are divided into routine operations and operations connected with the movement of capital.

"Routine hard currency operations":
  a) operations connected with the purchase and sale of hard currency assets, commodities, and services and the sale of rights to intellectual property, payments for which are carried out under conditions without deferment of payment and which do not presuppose the granting or receipt of loans;
  b) transfers of capital abroad and into the USSR from interest, dividends, and other receipts from bank deposits, loans, investments, and similar financial operations;
  c) transfers of capital of a nontrade nature, including transfers of wages, pensions, alimony, inheritances, and other analogous operations.

"Hard currency operations connected with the movement of capital" includes:
  a) investments, including the purchase and sale of securities;
  b) the granting and receipt of loans;
  c) the attraction and investment of capital into accounts and deposits;
  d) financial operations whose execution over a certain period of time ensures payment or transfer of rights of ownership of hard currency assets.

Article 2. Operations with USSR Currency

1. The territory of the USSR is a unified hard currency territory upon which the USSR and the subjects of the federation carry out a coordinated monetary, credit, and currency policy directed at strengthening the purchasing power of the ruble as the sole legal tender.

2. In relations between residents, USSR currency is accepted without reservations for the payment of any demands and obligations.

3. USSR currency may be owned by nonresidents so long as its source consists of capital in foreign currency brought or transferred into the USSR from abroad and received within the USSR on a legal basis.

4. The procedure for payments in rubles when carrying out hard currency operations as well as for any transactions between nonresident corporate bodies and for the opening of accounts by them in USSR currency in banking institutions is established by the USSR State Bank.

Transactions in the aforementioned instances with the use of USSR currency and accounts in rubles that have been completed in violation of the procedure established by the USSR State Bank are invalid.

5. Accounts in USSR currency in USSR banks may be opened by nonresidents in accordance with the procedure and conditions established by the USSR State Bank.

6. The taking and sending into the USSR from abroad and taking and sending out of the USSR to foreign countries by residents and nonresidents of USSR currency and securities denominated in USSR currency is prohibited except in instances stipulated by the USSR State Bank.

Article 3. Operations in Foreign Currency on the Territory of the USSR

The use of foreign currency as well as negotiable instruments in foreign currency to carry out payments on the territory of the USSR is permitted in accordance with procedure established by the USSR State Bank.

Article 4. The Rate of Exchange of the Ruble Against Foreign Currency

Routine regulation of the rate of exchange of the ruble against foreign currency and determination of the sphere of its obligatory use is carried out by the USSR State Bank. The republics take part in the regulation of the rate of exchange of the ruble through their own representation in the Central Council of the USSR State Bank.

Article 5. The Hard Currency Market of the USSR

1. The purchase and sale of foreign currency may be carried out on a domestic hard currency market of the USSR.

2. Operations on the hard currency market of the USSR are conducted by residents through authorized banks of the USSR at the market rate of exchange of the ruble against foreign currencies, which is calculated on the basis of the current correlation between supply and demand in the form of interbank transactions and transactions at hard currency exchanges and auctions.

Section II. The Powers of the Organs of Government and the Functions of the Banking System of the USSR in Hard Currency Regulation and Administration of Hard Currency Resources

Article 6. Functions of the USSR Supreme Soviet and the Supreme Soviets of the Republics in the Sphere of Currency Relations

1. The USSR Supreme Soviet determines the general principles of the currency and exchange rate policy of the USSR, adopts legislative acts on questions of hard currency regulation and control, and establishes in coordination with the republics the volume of the Union and republic hard currency fund, the limit of the national foreign debt of the USSR, and the total volume of state credits and other economic aid of the USSR to foreign states from the Union budget. It determines the powers of organs of state power and administration of the USSR in the sphere of hard currency relations.

2. Within the bounds of their jurisdiction, the Supreme Soviets of the republics determine republic-level currency policy within the framework of the general principles of the currency policy of the USSR, ensure observation of Union legislation and adopt republic-level hard currency legislation, establish the limit of national foreign debt of the republic and the total volume of state credits and other economic aid to foreign states from the republic budget, and distribute powers and functions in the hard currency sphere within the republics.

Article 7. Functions of the Union-Republic Hard Currency Committee

1. The Union-republic hard currency committee is the central state executive organ for administration of the hard currency resources of the USSR and it disposes of the Union-republic hard currency fund.

2. Within the limits of its jurisdiction the Union-republic hard currency committee, as a collegial organ of the USSR and the republics:

administers the formation, distribution, and use of the hard currency resources of the USSR with regard for national, republic, regional, and branch interests;

determines the need to obtain credits within the bounds of the limit of national foreign debt of the USSR established by the USSR Supreme Soviet and ensures the fulfillment of obligations to pay it off;

drafts measures directed at stimulating growth of the hard currency resources of the USSR.

Article 8. Functions of the USSR State Bank in Hard Currency Regulation

1. The USSR State Bank is the chief executive organ of state hard currency regulation and control.

2. Within the bounds of its jurisdiction the USSR State Bank, as a unified system of the central banks of the republics:

administers the hard currency reserves existing on its balance;

determines the sphere and procedure for the circulation of foreign currency on the territory of the USSR;

conducts all forms of hard currency operations;

regulates the hard currency market of the USSR;

regulates the exchange rate of the ruble against foreign currencies;

establishes general rules for the issuance of licenses and issues licenses (grants the status of authorized banks) to commercial banks to execute banking operations with hard currency assets and to service accounts in foreign currency for routine hard currency operations and hard currency operations connected with the movement of capital, and controls their activities;

establishes uniform methods of accounting, reporting, documentation, and statistics of hard currency operations;

prepares and publishes statistics of hard currency and financial operations of the USSR in accordance with accepted international standards.

3. The central banks of the republics carry out all types of hard currency operations and issue licenses (grant the status of authorized banks) to commercial banks and control their activities.

4. The USSR Bank for Foreign Economic Activities [deyatelnosti] is an authorized bank by virtue of its status.

5. The USSR State Bank conducts and publishes a register of authorized banks.

As a result of careless execution by an authorized bank of its functions, the USSR State Bank and the central banks of the republics, in instances stipulated in USSR banking legislation, may withdraw licensing for completed operations with hard currency assets and bank servicing of accounts in foreign currency.

Article 9. Functions of Authorized Banks and Execution of Hard Currency Operations

1. Authorized banks carry out hard currency operations on the territory of the USSR in accordance with their license.

2. Authorized banks are entrusted with the function of monitoring the observation of hard currency legislation by clients and report to them on operations being conducted.

Section III. The Procedure for Owning, Using, and Disposing of Hard Currency Assets

Article 10. The Right To Own Hard Currency Assets

1. Hard currency assets on the territory of the USSR may be owned by both residents and nonresidents.

2. The right to own hard currency assets on the territory of the USSR is guaranteed and defended by the state along with other objects of ownership.

Article 11. The Formation and Use of the Union-Republic Hard Currency Fund

1. The Union-republic hard currency fund accumulates hard currency resources of the USSR in the form of capital in foreign currency and other hard currency assets with the goal of supporting the stability of USSR currency, satisfying the demands of the country's economy in regard to national, republic, regional, and branch interests, fulfilling the obligations of the USSR to pay off its foreign debt, and providing for the needs of the social and economic development of the USSR.

2. The Union-republic hard currency fund is formed through the obligatory sale to the state of hard currency from the hard currency proceeds of residents in accordance with the procedure and amounts established by legislative acts of the USSR; through purchases of foreign currency through the USSR State Bank or authorized banks; through attracting hard currency capital abroad within the bounds of the limit established by the USSR Supreme Soviet on the national debt of the USSR; and through other sources.

3. Resources of the Union-republic hard currency fund are directed at:

stabilizing the exchange rate of the ruble against foreign currency;

paying off loans in foreign currency received by the USSR;

selling and loaning capital for payments toward goods and services that are purchased through importation according to centralized procedure;

granting credits to republics and local organs of government as well as authorized banks so that they may advance loans for foreign economic activity;

ensuring foreign economic and other ties of the USSR with foreign states.

Article 12. Formation and Use of Hard Currency Funds of the Republics and Local Organs of Government

1. The hard currency funds of the republics are formed through the obligatory sale to the state of hard currency from the hard currency proceeds of residents in accordance with the procedure and amounts established by legislative organs of the USSR and through the purchase of foreign currency through the central banks of the republics and authorized banks and the attraction, in accordance with Union-republic hard currency committees, of hard currency capital abroad so long as the responsibility for paying back the debt is assumed.

2. The hard currency funds of the local organs of government are formed using the hard currency funds of the republics in accordance with the procedure and

amounts established by legislative acts of those republics, the obligatory sale to these organs of hard currency from the hard currency proceeds of residents in accordance with the procedure and amounts established by legislative acts of the USSR, the purchase of foreign currency through authorized banks, and the attraction, in coordination with the central banks of the republics on whose territory they are located, of hard currency capital abroad so long as the responsibility for paying back the debt is assumed.

3. Hard currency funds of the republics and local organs of government are used by them independently for the needs of social and economic development.

Article 13. Formation and Use of Hard Currency Capital of Enterprises and Organizations

1. The hard currency capital of enterprises and organizations are formed using hard currency proceeds from foreign economic activities, purchases of hard currency on the domestic hard currency market of the USSR, and the receipt of capital in the form of hard currency credits as well as in other forms which do not contradict legislation of the USSR and of the subjects of the federation.

2. Hard currency capital of enterprises and organizations are kept in hard currency accounts and on deposit at authorized banks and it is used by them independently.

3. Enterprises and organizations have the right to combine their hard currency capital on a voluntary basis to resolve common tasks.

Article 14. Hard Currency Capital of Soviet and Foreign Citizens

Soviet and foreign citizens may own hard currency assets that have been brought, transferred, or sent into the USSR from abroad or received or purchased on the territory of the USSR in accordance with procedures that do not contradict this law, and they may keep it in accounts or on deposit in authorized banks and use it for goals that are not prohibited by legislation of the USSR and of the subjects of the federation.

Section IV. The Execution of Operations in Foreign Currency by Parties in Hard Currency Relations

Article 15. Procedure for the Execution of Hard Currency Operations by Resident Corporate Bodies

1. Resident corporate bodies independently use hard currency capital they own for the productive, social, and cultural development of their labor collectives and for other purposes that do not contradict legislation of the USSR and subjects of the federation.

2. Resident corporate bodies carry out, in accordance with the procedure and amounts established by legislative acts of the USSR, the obligatory sale of hard currency from the hard currency proceeds of foreign economic activities to Union-republic, republic, and local hard currency funds.

Enterprises and organizations that have foreign investments totalling 30 percent or more do not carry out the obligatory sale of hard currency.

3. The hard currency proceeds of resident corporate bodies from foreign economic activities must be entered in their accounts in authorized banks in the USSR if some other procedure has not been permitted by the USSR State Bank.

Resident corporate bodies may keep capital in foreign currency in accounts and on deposit in foreign banks so long as they have fulfilled the obligations stipulated in Paragraph 2 of this article in accordance with the procedure and under the conditions established by the USSR State Bank.

Resident corporate bodies having hard currency accounts abroad are obligated to present authorized banks, in accordance with procedure determined by the USSR State Bank, information about operations concerning these accounts.

Article 16. Execution of Hard Currency Operations by Resident Citizens

1. There are no limits on bringing, transferring, and sending foreign currency and other hard currency assets into the USSR from abroad by residents, in accordance with customs rules.

2. Capital of residents in foreign currency, including capital received by them on the territory of the USSR in accordance with legal procedure, may be freely entered in hard currency accounts in authorized banks.

3. Capital in foreign currency, including capital in the accounts of residents in authorized banks, may be sold by them for rubles to an authorized bank, transferred, and taken or transferred out of the USSR in accordance with customs rules on the travel abroad of the owner of an account.

4. Residents are allowed to open accounts and deposits in foreign currency abroad and keep foreign currency capital in them while the residents are abroad, and in other circumstances—in accordance with the procedure established by the USSR State Bank.

5. Transactions with hard currency assets between residents and between residents and nonresidents on the territory of the USSR are prohibited with the exception of the following instances:

the purchase and sale of hard currency assets by residents on the domestic hard currency market of the USSR through authorized banks;

a gift of hard currency assets to the state or to funds or organizations for charitable purposes;

a gift of hard currency assets to a spouse and close relatives;

the willing of hard currency assets and the receipt of them by right of inheritance;

the purchase, sale, and exchange for the purpose of collection of individual bank notes and change, including precious metals, in accordance with the procedure established by legislation of the USSR and of subjects of the federation.

6. It is permitted for residents to take foreign currency and other hard currency assets abroad in accordance with the requirements of customs legislation of the USSR.

Article 17. Procedure for the Execution of Hard Currency Operations on the Territory of the USSR by Nonresident Corporate Bodies and Citizens

1. Nonresidents may freely bring, transfer, and send hard currency assets into the USSR from abroad as well as out of the USSR to foreign countries if the aforementioned hard currency assets were previously brought, transferred or sent into the USSR from abroad or purchased on the territory of the USSR on a legal basis.

2. Capital of nonresidents in foreign currency transferred or brought into the USSR in accordance with customs rules or purchased by nonresidents according to established procedure on the territory of the USSR may be entered freely in accounts and on deposit at authorized banks and may without limitations be transferred abroad through authorized banks or taken out of the USSR to foreign countries.

3. Nonresidents may execute hard currency operations, including the purchase and sale of hard currency assets, only through authorized banks.

4. Capital of nonresidents in USSR currency received as a result of the sale of foreign currency to an authorized bank may be sold back to the authorized bank for foreign currency, and the proceeds from the sale may be freely transferred or taken abroad.

Section V. Hard Currency Control

Article 18. Goals and Directions of Hard Currency Control

The goal of hard currency control is to ensure observation of hard currency legislation in the execution of operations with hard currency assets.

The basic directions of control consist of verifying:

that operations have been conducted in accordance with existing hard currency legislation and that the necessary permits are present;

fulfillment by residents of obligations for the sale of hard currency to the state;

the validity of payments in foreign currency;

the completeness and objectivity of recording, accounting, and documentation for hard currency operations.

Article 19. Organs of State Hard Currency Control

Control over the legality of the execution of hard currency operations is carried out by the USSR State Bank, the central banks of the republics, and other authorized organs of the USSR and subjects of the federation. Authorized banks execute hard currency control within the bounds of their jurisdiction.

Section VI. Reporting on Hard Currency Operations and Responsibility for Violation of Hard Currency Legislation

Article 20. Reporting on Hard Currency Operations

The procedure for presenting reports, their types, forms, and presentation deadlines are determined by the USSR State Bank. Nonpresentation of reports on hard currency operations is viewed as a violation of hard currency legislation.

Article 21. Responsibility for Violation of Hard Currency Legislation

For violation of the provision of this law and other hard currency legislation, civil, administrative, and criminal action will be brought against those guilty in accordance with legislation of the USSR and subjects of the Federation.

Article 22. Responsibility of Authorized Organs of State Hard Currency Control

Authorized organs of state hard currency control and their officials that tolerate illegal activities with respect to owners of hard currency assets are accountable to them in accordance with legislation of the USSR and subjects of the federation.

[Signed] M. Gorbachev, president of the USSR
Moscow, the Kremlin, 1 March 1991

Agriculture

Official Views Price Rise Effect on Food Supplies

PM2503115991 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 22 Mar 91 Union Edition p 1

[Interview with B. Poshkus, deputy chairman of the State Commission for Food and Purchases, by M. Petrov; place and date of interview not given: "Will There Be More Food?"]

[Text] The announcement of the prices reform was no surprise for many of us although it gave rise to a whole range of contradictory feelings among which, however strange it may seem, hope occupies not the last place: On 2 April things whose taste we had started to forget may finally appear on the store shelves. Albeit at a higher price. How justified are hopes that the increase in prices will have a beneficial effect on the quantity of food? I put this question to B. Poshkus, deputy chairman of the State Commission for Food and Purchases:

[Poshkus] We shall wait and see, Bolyus Ignovich answered. But I consider it overhasty to dismiss this decision out of hand. First, the increase in prices will drastically alter the structure of consumption. People will begin to treat food with more care: both we customers and the workers at the stores, bases, and depots. For instance, it is well known that 5 million tonnes of bread is simply thrown into the garbage every year. The reasons for this include the fact that it is excessively cheap. The total calorific value of all the food produced in the country per capita is equal to 3,000 kilocalories a day. That is quite enough for normal nutrition. The fact that we do not know how to dispose of this resource sensibly is another matter. Second, in my view the increase in prices will cut off channels for the leakage of food from state stores and depots onto the collective farm markets.

[Petrov] All that is so, but will the increase in the cost of food products encourage their production? After all so far their production level is steadily declining: The livestock population and areas sown to crops are being reduced, and processing enterprises are closing down.

[Poshkus] The two questions should not be linked: the increase in retail prices and the further development of agriculture. The rise in prices merely stabilizes production and will reduce losses. An increase in agricultural production should be achieved by other means. For instance with the aid of state investments in the development of new manufacturing processes. Under the present system of "aid" for agriculture that sector works at a loss. Prices for industrial and and agricultural output are not balanced. Part of that discrepancy—68 billion rubles—was successfully put into new purchase prices last year. But a further 40 billion rubles remained completely uncompensated for the country's agriculture—construction, machinery, and mechanisms increased in cost several times over. I see the following way out: We will have to ask the government to raise purchase prices again, otherwise we will not break out of the vicious circle. [Poshkus ends]

Well, the country's agriculture should indeed be helped. Including from our pockets. Especially as a very recent example comes to mind: We only had to introduce contract prices for eggs for them to cease to be in short supply.

Nonetheless will the increase in prices allow agriculture to breathe more easily, at least for a while? Will this not lead to a new spiral of the rise in prices instead of the desired stabilization of production? Let us leave the question open. At any rate until the day of laughter and joy following which there should be complete clarity.

Spring Sowing Problems Examined

Part 1

PM2003104991 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 19 Mar 91 Union Edition p 2

[First part of survey by V. Gavrichkin: "Time To Save The Future Harvest"]

[Text]

1. Arable Land and Crops

Nature has been quite kind to us. Whether or not to believe the forecast (there is one) promising the most favorable agricultural year in recent decades is of no consequence, as the saying goes. But you cannot discount the real situation. And it is indeed promising.

It does not happen often but this year here is what has occurred: According to specialists' assessments 90 percent of the winter crops are emerging from the snow in a good or simply excellent state. Their potential loss will not be in excess of 3-4 million hectares (let us make the comparison: Last year, for instance, 2.7 million hectares of land sown to winter crops had to be resown and on average the figure over the three preceding years was 6 million). Nor is the drought worrying for the time being. In the main arable farming regions moisture stocks in the soil are above normal. The soil moisture stocks are somewhat worse only in the south Ukraine, the eastern part of Stavropol Kray, and individual places in Siberia.

Unfortunately, we have to end the pleasant part of this survey with these facts. How are we are prepared to take advantage of nature's favors no longer depends on nature. The hard, nervous harvest last fall has left an unpleasant trace: In their care for an "unprecedented" harvest the arable farmers were far from everywhere able to be concerned for the future harvest. Sowings of winter crops, which almost everywhere produce a bigger yield than spring crops, were reduced by 4.3 million hectares. Add to that the fallow land not plowed since the fall, the spring sowing over an enormous area (146.2 million hectares), the tending of the winter crops—and it will become clear that we cannot cope with a sudden onslaught here.

The USSR Cabinet of Ministers session which recently discussed questions of preparing for the sowing noted in particular that the volume of the forthcoming work this spring will increase approximately 25 percent compared with the usual volume. That is probably the case if we take the country as a whole. But we have already spoken repeatedly before and we would like now to stress the perfidious nature of average figures.

The grain regions of Kazakhstan, of Kulunda in Siberia, or the steppe region of Chelyabinsk Oblast are one thing. Here if the arable land has remained untended since fall indeed no particular problems arise: The grain growers long ago learned how to make do with a superficial, minimal tilling, to put the seeds into the soil directly on the stubble, using special stubble drills. But that cannot be done in, for instance, the Baltic republics or Russian non-Chernozem. And in Yaroslavl Oblast alone 65 percent of the winter crop sowing plan and 70 percent of the fall plowing plan have been unfulfilled. And the flax and grain crops have been left unharvested on 80,000 hectares. Well, the lost harvest cannot be returned but now for the sake of the future harvest these fields will also have to be treated with reverence.

The arable land in Bashkiria has not been prepared for one quarter of the spring crops—the spring which has arrived will, as they admit themselves, be the hardest in the past 20-30 years for the arable farmers. In 20 rayons of Saratov Oblast in some places 50 percent and in others 70-75 percent of the arable land has not been tilled since the fall...

That's enough examples, perhaps. In many oblasts and autonomous republics the volume of spring field work is increasing two to three times by comparison with the usual volume. In other words, in terms of strenuousness the sowing campaign is virtually on a par with the harvest. The difference is that because of the frenzy over the harvest one may lose just part of the harvest but if you do not cope in the spring you will lose the entire harvest.

Indeed delaying the sowing and carrying it out carelessly is also a near-catastrophe. Yet after all it is very easy to delay. In the Central Asian republics the spring (and that means the best time for field work) is 7-12 days late while in the south of the European part of the country it is 10-15 days late. It may be said that nature has stolen these days from the farmers.

I should not like to think that some of our economic leaders, faced with all these complexities, is deliberately easing his task today—probably that is not the case. Nonetheless you cannot keep quiet about the situation which is taking shape. An analysis of the working plans of kolkhozes [collective farms], state farms [sovkhozes], and agricultural associations reveals the intention to reduce by almost 1 million hectares the sowings of industrial crops, including a reduction of 0.5 million hectares for oil-producing crops. Considerably fewer potatoes and vegetables and even less grain will perhaps be sown.

There are many reasons, and they are all varied. But in their majority they are the grave legacy of the edict-based economy. Here is an eloquent example.

In Kursk Oblast the arable farmers have not had time to prepare 40 percent of the arable land allocated for sowing sugar beet. The reason? There was almost a month's delay in digging the roots last fall—the reception and processing of the harvests by the sugar refineries was delayed. As a result of the planned 3.9 million tonnes of sugar beet only 3 million were processed and the country failed to receive about 100,000 tonnes of sugar. One asks: Why do we grow it? But the center demands: Sow it!

On this plane the demand issuing from the central organs of management regarding an increase in grain crop sowings seems no less dangerous. But after all with extensive arable farming one cannot increase one thing without reducing something else. That means that we will again compel the arable farmers to reduce the amount of fallow land and disrupt crop rotations.

The country needs grain, who will dispute it. But the harvest is formed not only from the number of hectares. Today the southern rayons are already applying top-dressing everywhere. Although "everywhere" is perhaps an exaggeration: Many dozens of aircraft with fertilizers cannot fly over the fields—they have not been provided with aircraft fuel. The mineral fertilizers supplies are only 90 percent. And plant protection agents? We produce only a wretched quantity of our own, and of disgusting quality, and purchases abroad have been curtailed. Well, shall we estimate the losses?

Actually, talk about what we shall sow and how, about who should help our arable farmers, with what, and how, and about whether they have become or will become real masters on their fields will be contained in subsequent surveys.

Prepared by V. Gavrichkin on the basis of information from the USSR State Committee for Statistics, the State Commission for Food and Purchases, and IZVESTIYA correspondents V. But, A. Yershov, A. Zinovyev, M. Kurgalina, V. Kulagin, N. Lashkevich, V. Nikolayeva, M. Ovcharov, O. Stefashin, and G. Shcherbina.

Part 2

PM2103143391 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian
20 Mar 91 Union Edition p 2

[Second part of survey by V. Gavrichkin: "Time To Save The Future Harvest"; first two paragraphs are IZVESTIYA introduction; final paragraph is IZVESTIYA note]

[Text] In the previous issue of the newspaper (IZVESTIYA No. 66) we spoke about the state of arable land and crops. Although farmers have been lucky with winter crops, and the so far bounteous spring on the whole gladdens them, the fields have emerged lacerated from the last reaping and in many places have overwintered in an uncultivated state. It will not be easy to instill order on the land this spring. But much still has to be done on top of that to ensure that the future harvest really gladdens us.

We offer for your attention another topic of the spring agricultural review.

2. What You Sow...

But what will we sow? Not an easy question. Indeed, there are probably as many answers to the eternally painful problem—which seeds will be sown on arable land, and can a "good breed" be expected from them?—as there are farming regions in our country, each with its own distinguishing features.

Even a year ago Kursk Oblast farmers, for example, knew that the harvesting of beet plantations, which inevitably was late (we mentioned the reasons in our previous review), would leave them a very grave "fall legacy"—tens of thousands of hectares of fields left uncared-for during the winter. A shortfall of grain in the next harvest is almost inevitable here. But let us draw your attention to this barely noticeable "almost" in just the same way as the Kursk Oblast farmers did. They not only laid in stocks of high-grade wheat seeds but very rightly reckoned that only a drastic expansion of the areas sown to corn for grain, millet, buckwheat, and peas could really be of any help under the conditions which had come about. Kursk Oblast farmers set aside 130,000 hectares for peas alone—have you ever heard of such a thing!

They had almost no home-grown seeds of reserve crops—they found them... in Kazakhstan. They laid in 6,000 tonnes of corn seeds grown in Odessa Oblast, Moldova, the Kuban, and Dnepropetrovsk Oblast, with different ripening times. But... Permit us to utter this notorious "but" without curbing our emotions, for all that has been enumerated is to the credit of the Kursk Oblast Agro-Industrial Union and the Oblast Grain Products Administration. Many kolkhozes [collective farms] and sovkhozes [state farms] are indifferent to the efforts of the higher oblast authorities. There is no other word for it, if the interfarm seed exchange proceeds poorly and spontaneously there, although in certain rayons—Fatezhskiy Rayon, for example—10-14 percent of the seed stock is unfit for sowing. And now judge for yourselves: Would a true master really let this happen, and given such potential too?

But we let it happen. And Kursk Oblast farms are far from being an extreme example. It is reported from the Altay that they have not had such bad seeds as now for some 15 years. On the other hand, seed grain in the North Caucasus, especially on the Don, is high-grade. But if we leaf through reports over several past years, we will see for ourselves that it also happened here that farmers screwed up their eyes when scattering seeds on the land and sowed whatever was available. And they will be sowing this way in Bashkiria this year too. Wheat seeds are bad. Things are even worse with rye: If winter crops have to be resown, there will be nowhere to get them. And this in places where a year ago rye occupied 29 percent of the area sown to grain and gave a good harvest—an average of 27 quintals.

The reason? We have already spoken of the lack of a master. But the chief reason is that the system of seed growing, its organization, and its material base are no good. Of the 900 farms in Bashkiria, 600 do not have any grain driers at all, and things are bad as regards storage space and grain threshing floors. Over the past five years alone the republic has imported 548,000 tonnes of seed grain worth 100 million rubles [R]. And things are the same or almost the same in the country as a whole: We extricate ourselves mainly thanks to the boundlessness of the territory. Today Kazakhstan, the North Caucasus, and a number of Ukrainian oblasts are helping out. But tomorrow? Tomorrow too, some place will have luck with the harvest and the weather, and we will lay in a store.

This year provides graphic confirmation of this. In general, there are enough seeds of spring crops, albeit of not very high quality. However, we travel from region to region for the interrepublican exchange of 658,000 tonnes of grain. And 2.7 million tonnes of them have been allocated from state resources, as a whole, to make good the shortfall in seeds at the request of the republics' governments, including 822,000 tonnes for loan and for sale, and the rest for exchange.

I would like to draw special attention to the last point. Requests are coming in from everywhere to be sold more seeds or to have more loans issued on account, for exchanges have proved very costly to farms. This applies primarily to corn seeds.

This is the third year that Altay Kray farmers, for example, have imported seed corn from the Ukraine, the North Caucasus, and Moldova, and this year they have been told to pay out up to R3,000 for every tonne of corn and also to hand over two tonnes of grain to the country's grain feed fund. To their cost! Even on the Don, where there are now plenty of seeds of corn hybrids and grading plants have coped with their task, farms are waiting to see what decision Moscow will adopt: To sell corn or to exchange it one-for-one for grain. All hope to get the go-ahead to buy, and they have no wish to exchange wheat for corn because, given the total scarcity, economic planners want to receive many other things in exchange for their grain.

Their hopes seem to be in vain. Nizhniy Novgorod Oblast farmers are already calculating: Instead of forking out three tonnes of grain and R2,000-3,000 per tonne of corn, would it not be altogether simpler to abandon corn silage and use their own grain (it costs them R136 per tonne) to feed livestock?

There is undoubtedly a question here. Last fall kolkhozes and sovkhozes held back the sale of grain to the state. Everyone knows how gravely the country's grain balance is now shaping up. It is very tempting to rectify the situation, including by means of exchanges. But, by administratively setting the height of exchange barriers, can anyone vouch that such a barrier will not prove beyond the reach of some and "not of interest" to others and, as a result, areas sown to corn will diminish, the feed base of livestock raising will be seriously undermined, and yields of corn grain will plummet? Over many decades the state has gotten accustomed to taking all it needs from kolkhozes and sovkhozes by force. If not by force of an order, then through exorbitant prices or a nonequivalent exchange. The result is well known. Are we not repeating the old way by dressing up in pseudomarket clothes?

Since we are talking about seeds, we should not overlook agents for their chemical protection. The deadlines for treating corn seeds or, as people also say, encrusting them, with simultaneous dressing, are passing and have already passed in many places. And yet a quite wretched proportion of them has been treated—there is nothing to use. There is no currency to buy it, and in a number of places their own "harmful" shops—although God knows what they were producing—have been closed down by the "greens."

On a par with this problem is the shortage of herbicides and pesticides. Weeds, of which there were already enough, will now have an entirely free run of the fields because of the increased volume of spring plowing and minimal treatment. The forecast for diseases and the emergence of pests on agricultural plants is depressing. Harvest losses could be very serious here. They are estimated at 8-10 million tonnes for grain, for example, and at 14 million tonnes for vegetables and potatoes. These figures are relative, we realize. In Voronezh Oblast, for example, farms have scraped together in the corn bins a mere 30 percent of the required quantity of various preparations. Local agricultural chemists now aver that, given such a shortage, the risk of losing up to half of the harvest is becoming perfectly real.

Material prepared by V. Gavrichkin on the basis of information from the USSR State Committee for Statistics, the State Commission for Food and Purchases, and IZVESTIYA correspondents V. But, A. Yershov, M. Kurgalina, V. Kulagin, V. Mirolevich, V. Nikolayeva, E. Matskevich, M. Ovcharov, and G. Shcherbina.

Spring Planting Needs Industrial Support

914B0123A Moscow SELSKAYA ZHIZN in Russian 19 Mar 91 p 1

[Article by Mikhail Sharov: "Will the Hammer Help the Sickle? Sad Reflections on the Eve of the Spring Planting Campaign"]

[Text] In the heat of political passions and declarations to the effect that March is going to be fateful for our still infant democracy it appears that we have somehow forgotten that March is also the beginning of spring. This is what I would like esteemed urban dwellers, who so eagerly test their vocal potential at various rallies, to recall (you will subsequently understand why): that, among other things, spring is the time when crops get started. As we sit down today at a dinner table which is quite poor, it is not at all untoward or superfluous to recall the forthcoming planting campaign, and even ask ourselves this question: How is the villager doing out there, what does he think about in his "sovereign" farmyard? Could it be that he also fusses somewhere with banners and flags instead of milking cows and preparing for the planting campaign?

I will immediately reassure the city dwellers: No, thank God, the peasant still has not taken part in the excitement of rallies (what would one really want with him?). He is still unaware of the belligerent agony of feelings. All we should do is marvel at his great patience and render him a deep bow of gratitude for this. After all, if anybody at all should have gone on strike long ago, it is he, the peasant, because his life at present is one that, as they say, God should forbid: Spring is upon us, but, in essence, he has nothing to go into the field with. This is not the fault of the peasant but rather of the person who should have manufactured all of this in the city. It appears that our uneasy time has begun to test the strength of the union of the sickle and the hammer as well, and the hammer has begun to frequently ignore the interests of the sickle.

In essence, this is precisely how the issue was raised at a recent meeting of the USSR Cabinet of Ministers which reviewed the progress of preparations for and the conduct of the spring planting campaign. The high cabinet found that preparations for fieldwork on the farms are the most pressing task of the day and the highest priority; it also found that the hungry cities have left the countryside to its own devices as far as its difficulties are concerned, having failed, in official parlance, to deliver material and technical resources as planned.

All of this is known, but I will allow myself to observe that this discussion was quite belated. Measures which the government took were at least half a year late. After all, as early as last year the countryside pleaded: Brothers, we are in a bind, we truly are. However, the cities did not hear the countryside, they did not want to hear, and this was not the first time either...

Meanwhile, reality is such that it does not make us confident that food will be more abundant this year than it was last year. It so happened that last year many farms did not manage to do fall plowing and plant winter crops because of the rainy weather. As a result, the volume of forthcoming spring fieldwork increased by 25 to 30 percent on average in our country. Those who know anything at all about agriculture will see the tremendous material and moral efforts which this spring requires of the rural populace, and the resulting need of the worker on the land for technical equipment in order to be able to both plow the land and place the seeds in it within a short period of time, compressed by nature to the extreme!

Here are some bitter statistics, however. Last year, the rural areas of Russia alone failed to receive 36,000 tractors; state orders were only 75 percent fulfilled. The countryside failed to receive thousands of the combine harvesters promised, thousands of drawn and tractor-mounted pieces of equipment. In the two months of this year, output of spare parts declined by 10 percent compared to 1990—and last year output of spare parts for tractors declined by seven percent and that of spare parts for farm machinery by nine percent. The Rubtsovsk Tractor Spare Parts Plant filled as much as 15 percent of orders for the countryside in January and February, and the Frolovo Steel Foundry filled as much as 27 percent. The list of those in arrears goes on, and on, and on. This means that thousands of tractors, cultivators, plows, and seeders will not go to the fields. A shortage of diesel fuel, oils, mineral fertilizer, and pesticides is very acutely felt.

The urban areas appear to be doing everything in order to teach the kolkhozes [collective farms] and sovkhozes [state farms] a lesson, or, in plain language, to bring them to their knees, and put the peasants in their place, so that they will know where they stand and will not raise a ruckus.

A kolkhoz chairman travels to a plant and pleads tearfully: "Help us out; after all, we are not the only ones who eat bread, you do too." However, at the plant they look at the applicant haughtily and say majestically: "All right, we will sell you the unit, the machine, or the metal, but only on the condition that you ship five tons of meat or transfer 20,000 rubles [R] to the financial incentives fund. Otherwise, you know where the door is." How cynical does one have to be to mercilessly fleece the peasant who is impoverished to begin with?! What kind of market is it where requisitions are the law?!

I dread to think about what will happen to all of us, construction workers and drivers, officials and metal workers, shoemakers and candy-makers, the left and the right, if by this fall the patience of the peasants runs out and they also start posturing and say: "Stay away from us!", or set exorbitant prices for grain or meat as have now been set for tractors and combine harvesters, seeders and winnowing machines, fertilizer and construction materials. At present, you need to fork over more than R100,000 in order to build a house for three or four people in the countryside. Agrarian specialists from Leningrad have made calculations and cried: This, shall we say, "concern" for the countryside will cost their oblast alone R1.2 billion. How many billion does the countryside have to keep at the ready in order to settle with the cities? Given this "equivalent" exchange, all kolkhozes and sovkhozes will be reduced to poverty overnight!

I hear the voice of a stranger: "Why are you sucking up to the villagers so zealously? We know them for what they are. Giving something to a peasant is like throwing it down a bottomless pit; he will waste everything and let it rot. All the peasant knows how to do is distill moonshine and prop up the wall. His is a one-track mind: How to filch things which are left unattended." Believe me, there are many didactic letters of this kind in the editorial mailbag. More often than not they are sent from cities.

What can we say? Indeed, they do drink in the countryside. Indeed, they frequently fail take proper care of what they have. They wreck machinery when they are sloshed, and on occasion they dump fertilizer into rivers. It is true indeed. However, they still do not have time to prop up the wall. Village people are hard workers by their very nature. They do not strike even under the unequal conditions we have created for them. They milk the cows, fatten the calves, and even intend to plant on time, despite everything.

There is one more truth: The mood of the countryside is not good at present. The people look at empty shelves in the stores and wonder: How is it that in the urban areas they criticize us for working poorly, but they do not want to make even an elementary shovel for us? Should we perhaps go to the squares and test the strength of our vocal cords? How will the cities respond on an empty stomach?

Incidentally, the selection of goods in the rural areas is considerably smaller than in the cities. There is a whole lot of nothing. On 12 March, our newspaper published a short letter by milkmaids from the village of Baratovki in Nikolayevsk Oblast. It makes me think very sad thoughts. Pardon me for harsh words, but to what humiliating condition have we men reduced rural women if they are forced to walk about without underwear because it is not sold in the store of a rural consumer cooperative? Please believe me, esteemed urbanites, there are no cotton-fabric mills and garment factories in the rural areas; it is not their line of business.

Do you know what I was thinking as I shared with you, my dear readers, my not-exactly-optimistic reflections at a time when land, which badly misses a plowman, is about to beckon him? Perhaps, all of us have an instinct for self-preservation. All of us eat in order to live rather than live in order to eat. Perhaps, now that the social temperature has risen and the mercury has hit the stopper, would it not be more reasonable to abandon mutual resentment and claims, forget about the squares and the microphones, and remember our daily bread, which may not be there unless we make sure that it is growing now?

To be sure, politics is important but one needs to eat too. Is this not the time to exclaim, paraphrasing Ilf and Petrov: "Of course, all of us like democracy, but we also need to work!" Perhaps, it is still not too late to go to the rural areas and ask them: What do you need? How can we help you? All of us should go, those who forge metal and those who sew alike. At present, it is altogether imprudent to leave the rural areas one on one with difficulties.

Soviet-American Farm Journal Published

914B0120B Moscow SELSKAYA ZHIZN in Russian 15 Mar 91 p 3

[Article by O. Akulova: "The Discovery of America"]

[Text] The first issue of the Soviet-American publication NOVYY FERMER has been published.

No one is surprised these days by a new publication. People are beginning to lose their way in the bottomless pit of publications and it is quite difficult today to spark reader interest. Nonetheless, there is no doubt but that the Soviet-American publication NOVYY FERMER will find the path to its reader. The new publication is intended for people other newspapers and magazines do not indulge with attention, people who require specific, business-oriented assistance.

NOVYY FERMER is a production publication intended primarily for the emerging new farmer who can derive benefit from the experience of our homeland and from that of America as well. But it is also true that the very first issue of the publication has shown the prospect of equal interest and benefit on the part of readers who are lessees, rural residents, managers of farmhouse-adjoining plots, and city dwellers—all those who love to dabble in gardening.

Free farm management is for us a new matter. And Soviet farmers will find the experience of their American colleagues along this thorny path quite useful. It is, therefore, one of the tasks of the publication to talk about the organization of the farming business in the United States and other countries, to illustrate the production technology being applied there, and to familiarize readers with new varieties of agricultural crops and livestock breeds. In short, as publishers of the journal emphasize, we wish to make a discovery of farming America jointly with the reader.

The American partner in this undertaking—Rodale Press Inc., a publishing corporation in Pennsylvania, has many years of experience in issuing agricultural publications and is prepared to provide practical as well as theoretical assistance. Thus, a shop is being built to produce sausage and ready-to-eat meat products using American technology in the Sovkhoz [state farm] Imeni 50th Anniversary of Great October, Noginskiy Rayon, Moscow Oblast, which owns 25 percent of the shares in the joint enterprise Periodicals, Trading, Service. Here in the village of Kudinovo a small farm on the American model will soon be set up at which Soviet farmers will be able to undergo on-the-job training.

Engaged in the cooperative effort on the Soviet side will be scholars, specialists, and practicians, who will explain on the pages of NOVYY FERMER how best to organize their effort and will offer their recommendations.

"We do not want our agrarian publication to turn into science fiction," states NOVYY FERMER editor Yu.A. Naumov.

U.S. Ambassador to the USSR J. Matlock attended the presentation of the new Soviet-American publication.

Scientific

'Molniya-3' Communications Satellite Launched

LD2303092691 Moscow TASS in English 0911 GMT 23 Mar 91

[Text] Moscow March 23 TASS—The Molniya-3 communications satellite was launched in the Soviet Union on Friday by a Molniya booster rocket.

The satellite is used for ensuring far radio telephone and telegram communications, transmitting Soviet Central Television programmes to Orbita network receivers and for international cooperation.

The satellite has been placed on the orbit with the following parameters: apogee—39,082 kilometers in the northern hemisphere, perigee—468 kilometers in the southern hemisphere, orbital period—eleven hours and 41 minutes, orbital inclination—62.8 degrees.

Communication sessions via the satellite will be conducted in accordance with the schedule.

Mir Space Station Docking Postponed

LD2303160891 Moscow All-Union Radio Mayak Network in Russian 1408 GMT 23 Mar 91

[Text] [Announcer] On the line with us is the Flight Control Center. Over to our special correspondent, Vladimir Bezyayev.

[Bezyayev] You can probably hear me alright, can you?

[Announcer] Yes, yes.

[Bezyayev] Well, alas, the news is not very pleasant! We observed the freighter approach the station and was almost five to seven meters away when suddenly the image on the television screen floated away somewhere to the left. That means that the ship's computer system decided to postpone the docking, to take the ship away, and, honestly speaking, we were almost a little beside ourselves here when it looks, from the camera, as if the ship is going to cut into the side a little bit. But that is how the electronics work.

The docking has been postponed at the moment. The ship is approximately 50-100 meters from the Mir orbital complex and the Flight Control Center is now making a decision. But, well, Leonid Lazarevich and I are obliged to turn to specialists to find out how things are going. Well, here is the latest from Leonid Lazarevich.

[Lazarevich] You know, the docking was calculated so that it could be carried out tomorrow, too, just in case. Well, Vladimir Solovyev, the flight leader, has just said that there is fuel for a docking tomorrow. But this evening and tonight the Flight Control Center will analyze the information. So far, it is believed that there is no pitch control [net upravleniya po tengazhu], and therefore, the docking could not take place. But the specialists will think and work. They have got the day and night ahead of them and, obviously, it must be presumed that an attempt at a new docking will be made tomorrow.

[Announcer] Well, of course that is distressing. But, nonetheless, we will hope for success. Thank you. Those were my colleagues Vladimir Bezyayev and Leonid Lazarevich from Flight Control Center.

Moscow Soviet To Close City's 9 Nuclear Reactors

PM2203170291 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 0600 GMT 20 Mar 91

[From the "Business Courier" program: Report over video on Moscow's nuclear reactors]

[Text] [Announcer] According to an INTERFAX report, the Moscow City Soviet Presidium has decided that the operation of nuclear reactors in the capital is inadvisable and the construction of new nuclear reactors is impermissible.

According to this decision, based on the conclusions of an expert commission, all the nine nuclear reactors which are in operation in Moscow are to be shut down by July 1999.

The first to be shut down will be the reactor belonging to the Kurchatov Atomic Energy Institute.

Reactor owners must to agree a plan of measures with the Moscow city and rayon soviets to protect the population in the event of reactor accidents.

Military

Yazov Addresses Military Sovkhoz Leaders

PM2203135191 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 21 Mar 91 First Edition p 3

[Colonel V. Kolbenkov report: "Conference of Military Sovkhoz Leaders"]

[Text] Last year proved complex for the country's agriculture. Nevertheless, production of produce increased on military sovkhozes [state farms] and subsidiary farms of the USSR Ministry of Defense: Their work resulted in 317,000 tonnes of grain, 119,000 tonnes of meat, and 234 million eggs. This made it possible to switch to new norms more in keeping with servicemen's needs.

Lieutenant General N. Kozlov, chief of the Defense Ministry's Central Food Directorate, who delivered the report, focused attention on ways to further enhance production. Today 84 military sovkhozes, three economically accountable subsidiary farms, 80 special dairy units, and 8,000 subsidiary farms of military units and subunits cultivate 283,000 hectares of arable land and keep 96,000 head of cattle, 12,500 horses, 705,000 hogs, 250,000 sheep, and more than 2 million poultry. All this is needed to surmount the difficulties of supplying the Armed Forces with food under the new conditions.

The conference was addressed by Marshal of the Soviet Union D. Yazov, USSR minister of defense; Colonel Gen. N. Shlyaga, chief of the USSR Armed Forces Main Military-Political Directorate; and Army Gen. V. Arkhipov, USSR deputy defense minister and chief of the USSR Armed Forces Rear Services.

Yazov Outlines Effort To Record War Dead

PM2203225191 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 23 Mar 91 Second Edition pp 1-2

[Interview with Marshal of the Soviet Union D. Yazov, USSR defense minister, by A. Gorokhov under the general heading "Marking the 50th Anniversary of the Start of the Great Patriotic War": "Have We Settled the War's Accounts?"; place and date not given]

[Text] The preparation of a package of documents implemented in fulfillment of the 8 February 1991 presidential decree "On Additional Measures to Commemorate Soviet Citizens Who Died Defending the Motherland in the Prewar Years, During the Great Patriotic War, and in Execution of their International Duty" has been completed at the USSR Defense Ministry.

Concerning this we put a few questions to Marshal of the Soviet Union D. Yazov, USSR defense minister.

[Gorokhov] What are these documents and who prepared them?

[Yazov] Two working groups were set up to elaborate proposals for the USSR Cabinet of Ministers on implementing the decree. The first working group—led by Colonel General A. Kleymenov, deputy chief of the General Staff—drafted the union law on commemorating the fallen defenders of the motherland.

[Gorokhov] It seems that we have never had such a law in our history.

[Yazov] No, even though there has long been a need for one. The organizational, financial, and legal aspects of the work to commemorate them will be regulated for the first time. The security of military burial grounds will also be enshrined in law.

[Gorokhov] Did the same group prepare the draft all-Union program on the regulation and provision of facilities for burial services?

[Yazov] Not just that. The draft envisages completing the search for and burial of the remains of fallen defenders of the fatherland. Implementation of the program is planned for 1991-1995. Moreover, proposals have been formulated for ensuring the safety and proper maintenance of Soviet military cemeteries outside our country.

[Gorokhov] What did the second working group do?

[Yazov] Under the leadership of Fleet Admiral A. Sorokin it drew up proposals to resolve organizational, material, and financial issues connected with carrying out the search work and publishing an All-Union Book of Remembrance.

[Gorokhov] June 22 marks the 50th anniversary of the start of the Great Patriotic War. As far as I am aware, the many years of research to analyze and sum up our losses during the war years have been completed by the General Staff...

[Yazov] Calculations show that, during the Great Patriotic War, including the Far East campaign, the Army and Navy together with border guards and internal troops lost 8,668,400 servicemen. These are so-called irrevocable losses.

[Gorokhov] Could you please explain to readers what this concept means...

[Yazov] Irrevocable losses are the number of dead servicemen who were missing in action, who were captured and did not return from captivity, and who died from their wounds, sickness, or as a result of accidents. This number does not include the almost 940,000 people who were listed as missing in action at the start of the war but were subsequently drafted into the Army in 1942-1943 in the liberated territories, or the 1,836,000 former servicemen who returned from captivity after the war.

[Gorokhov] The years 1941-1942 account for more than half of our irrevocable losses...

[Yazov] According to General Staff calculations, those years account for 56.7 percent of overall losses for the entire war. I think that readers will have to be satisfied with those sad statistics for the time being because this is a subject for a separate conversation.

[Gorokhov] The PRAVDA mailbag convincingly shows that society's moral wound over the fact that even today—half a century since the war started—unburied remains of our servicemen are continually discovered is not healing. Various figures are given—30,000 or even 1 million. Why are we just unable to "settle accounts" with the war?

[Yazov] Let's try to imagine the first few years of the war, even though that is very very difficult today. There were terrible defensive battles, withdrawals, encirclements... Quite frankly, the dead were buried in haste. I recall that immediately after the war we were engaged in mine-clearing operations. Burial services were held, but once again remains were not moved from the marshes and forests. Time has cleared these burial places too.

[Gorokhov] In February 1946 the Soviet of People's Commissars adopted a resolution on the provision of graves for servicemen and partisans, and their upkeep...

[Yazov] In my view, the measures envisaged then were doomed to fail from the outset. Judge for yourself: The Union government did not make any organizational or financial commitment. The job was given to republic and local organs of power. What's more, this was on ravaged territories. For instance, in Kaluga, Kalinin, Smolensk, and Rostov Oblasts alone by the end of the war there were tens of thousands of communal and individual graves where almost a million people had been buried. Where could we get the resources or the money to ensure the upkeep of these burial sites? That was how many "known" dead came to be listed as MIA's. That resolution said nothing about finding and burying unburied remains.

[Gorokhov] What has the Defense Ministry done recently to remedy the situation?

[Yazov] For instance, a remembrance vigil was held in the village of Myasnoy Bor in Novgorod Oblast in May 1989. Youth search detachments, veterans, Leningrad Military District servicemen, and students at military colleges took part in it. We were able to identify and bury the remains of more than 3,000 servicemen and commanders of the 2d Strike Army, and the 52d and 59th Armies who were killed in 1942. A similar event was held in the Smolensk area last year. At the end of 1989 the ministry set up an unofficial [neshtatnyy] commemoration coordination center.

[Gorokhov] What are the troops' tasks for 1991?

[Yazov] You know, I have a clear picture of the front line for each year of the war. That is why I have issued instructions to the commands of the Leningrad, Baltic, Belorussian, Moscow, North Caucasus, Kiev, Odessa, and Carpathian Military Districts and the Northern, Baltic, and Black Sea Fleets.

Of course, it is impossible to go over a front-line territory that is some 4,000 km long and several hundred kilometers wide with a fine-tooth comb. We know the search areas; they have been divided up into sectors and "assigned" to formation commanders. As soon as the snow melts we will again start looking and carry out burials in communal graves.

The main thing is to find all the still-unburied remains, and to do everything possible to that end...

Defense Ministry Holds Party Conferences

PM2203134191 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 21 Mar 91 First Edition p 2

[Report by correspondent under the rubric "Party Conferences": "Following Course of Renewal"]

[Text] At the party conference of USSR Defense Ministry main and central directorates there was a principled discussion of Communists' contribution to the cause of enhancing the combat readiness of the USSR Armed Forces and strengthening the personnel's political and moral state and discipline.

The political situation in the country and the activity of party organizations in realizing the decisions of the 28th CPSU Congress and the subsequent plenums of the party's Central Committee were analyzed in the report of Colonel General A. Ovchinnikov, first deputy chief of the Main Military-Political Directorate of the USSR Armed Forces, and in the speeches of Lieutenant General V. Filippov, Lieutenant General I. Panov, Colonel A. Yezhov, Colonel Yu. Samsonov, and others.

Participating in the work of the conference were Colonel General N. Shlyaga, chief of the USSR Armed Forces Main Military-Political Directorate; Army General V. Yermakov, USSR deputy defense minister for personnel and chief of the USSR Ministry of Defense Main Personnel Directorate; and I. Kovyrin, deputy head of the CPSU Central Committee Organizational Department.

Baltic Republics

Baltics Urge CSCE Conference on Grievances

AU2303145491 Paris AFP in English 0939 GMT 23 Mar 91

[Text] Moscow, March 23 (AFP)—A consultative body grouping the three Baltic republics of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, has called on the 35-nation Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) to look into their grievances, INTERFAX news agency announced Saturday [23 March].

A resolution adopted by the Baltic Council was signed by Presidents Arnold Ruutel of Estonia and Anatolijs Gorbunovs of Latvia, and Lithuanian Vice President Kazimieras Motieka.

The council met at Jurmala near Riga, capital of Latvia, Friday for the first time since Soviet troops quelled pro-independence rallies in January. It also set up a permanent secretariat in Riga.

INTERFAX said Lithuanian President Vytautas Landsbergis did not attend the meeting "for security reasons". Mr. Landsbergis has not left the Vilnius parliament for nearly three months.

The resolution said a meeting under the aegis of the CSCE would help the Baltic republics to become "full members of the CSCE" and allow for talks on "legal, military and strategic" aspects of the issue.

Moscow annexed the three republics in 1940 after Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union carved up Eastern Europe. The annexation was never recognized by Western nations.

TASS Reports Baltic Session on Independence

LD2303215291 Moscow TASS in English 2128 GMT 23 Mar 91

[By TASS correspondent Valeriy Zaytsev]

[Text] Riga March 24 TASS—The Baltic Council has met in Jurmala. The topic of the session is the quest for solution to the problem of the restoration of independence of the Baltic republics. Estonia was represented by chairman of the republican parliament Arnold Ruutel and Prime Minister Edgar Savisaar, Lithuania—by deputy chairman of the Lithuanian parliament Kazimieras Motieka and Latvia—by chairman of the Latvian parliament Anatoliy Gorbunov and some members of parliament.

Participants in the session pointed to the need for turning the Baltic problem into an international issue, because contacts with the Union have not made it possible so far to pass over to concrete talks on the restoration of independence. This is why international initiatives are needed, that would be aimed at promoting or mediating at interstate talks between delegations of parliaments and governments of the Baltic republics and a delegation of the Soviet Union.

Participants in the session decided to appeal to member states of the Conference for Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) and to other countries and suggest the holding of an international conference, or several conferences, on the Baltic problem. The conference could work out proposals on the settlement of the Baltic independence problem and analyse the international-legal and military-strategic aspects of the problem.

Representatives of the republics are sure that the conference would promote the beginning and successful holding of talks with the Soviet Union.

The session of the Council also discussed the proposal on the creation of a Baltic parliament—a consultative authority to the Lithuanian, Latvian and Estonian parliaments. It could discuss and prepare draft laws and resolutions on various socio-economic issues affecting the three republics.

Gorbunovs Meets Media on Baltic Council Session

LD2203195891 Riga Domestic Service in Latvian 1700 GMT 22 Mar 91

[Report by Anta Busa, correspondent from the Latvian Supreme Council press center]

[Text] [Busa] Good evening, good evening! Today, the Latvian legislature was involved in several activities. First, in Jurmala, the Baltic Council met at the Benjamin Summer House. Kazimieras Motieka, Lithuanian Supreme Council deputy chairman; Estonian Supreme Council Chairman Arnold Ruutel; and Edgar Savisaar arrived. From the Republic of Latvia, Supreme Council Chairman Anatolijs Gorbunovs; Secretary Imants Daudiss; Aleksandr Kirsteins and Valdis Steins, foreign affairs commission deputies; and Foreign Minister Janis Jurkans, attended.

This meeting initially appeared as merely consultative, to search for further movement toward restoring the independence processes of Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia, which appeared to have stopped after the bloody events of January and after the poll, or ballot, by the people which was so hopeful and which we regarded as a mighty argument for the USSR to start concrete talks on restoring our independent statehood. However, Gorbachev has not hurried to arrive at a conclusion or an action. Therefore, the Baltic Council, through the appeal adopted today—indirectly, also to him—to the participating CSCE countries and other countries reiterates that the Baltics await a solution.

This afternoon, Anatolijs Gorbunovs received the special Europarliament delegation which has arrived in Latvia and expressed a wish that, like the Nordic Council, future parliamentary cooperation would also develop with the Europarliament, which the guests were also promising.

After this meeting, Anatolijs Gorbunovs, answering journalists' questions, said that he had informed the Europarliament representatives about the Baltic Council appeal to organize an international conference on the Baltics' question, and they had taken this, so to say, into consideration.

But, about the Baltic Council and the intended international conference's work, he said the following:

[Begin recording] [Gorbunovs] The conference would be in various stages, or various conferences, but there are two principal questions here:

First, this conference might discuss, from the aspect of international law, in the first place, the problem of the Baltics insofar as how to restore our independent Baltic states.

Second, it might examine the question of how the Baltic states can be included in various European processes, if only in the CSCE process now already in the Helsinki processes, how the Baltic states could become included already immediately. [sentence as heard] Of course, it would also examine various specific problems with military-strategic matters and other matters.

[Busa] Another important question you discussed today at the Baltic Council involved forming Baltic legislatures. How far has this idea been accepted?

[Gorbunovs] Forming Baltic legislatures, such a proposal did not gain acceptance at this meeting of ours.

[Busa] (?I mean), why?

[Gorbunovs] I think that this is a question for the future. We have not exhausted the activity of those structures which we have just now, just now created, that is, in engagement with the Baltic Council. If the structures, the already created structures, of the Baltic Council have not begun to work effectively, then creating another structure alongside would not be useful at present. But, this is a question for the future, and this is not being removed from the agenda. [end recording]

Varennikov Meets Latvia's Bisers, Visits Liepaja

PM2403135991 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 22 Mar 91 First Edition p 3

[Report by correspondent Colonel M. Ziyeminsh: "Meeting at the Latvian Council of Ministers"]

[Text] Riga—A meeting was held at the Latvian Council of Ministers 20 March between Army General V. Varennikov, member of the commission set up by the USSR president for talks with Latvia, commander in chief of ground forces and USSR deputy defense minister, and I. Bisers, the republic's first deputy prime minister.

Agreement was reached that both sides would formulate a range of questions concerning the relationship between the local authorities and the troops stationed on the republic's territory. It was also decided to set up an information center which will periodically inform the public about the activities of the commission for military matters.

The same day Army Gen. V. Varennikov visited the city of Liepaja, where he familiarized himself with the potential for partially converting the local military port to civilian use.

TASS Reports Latvian KGB News Conference

LD2103212491 Moscow TASS in English 2056 GMT 21 Mar 91

[By TASS correspondent Valeriy Zaytsev]

[Text] Riga March 21 TASS—KGB officers in Latvia, together with Interior Ministry bodies, seized 360 firearms last year. The recently established organised crime section detected imported equipment, worth several dozen millions of rubles in terms of hard currency, which was not assembled and put into operation.

The KGB is investigating several explosions detonated recently in Latvia.

These data were quoted at a news conference held by republican KGB leaders here today. Earlier, Latvian KGB Chairman Admund Ehanson [name as received] sent a letter to the republican parliament and government, expressing concern over the political situation in Latvia. The response of the republican leadership to the letter is unknown until now.

Therefore, the KGB leaders decided to use the press to bring their opinion about the present situation to the attention of the Latvian population.

In their opinion, "the analysis of the present situation in Latvia shows that negative processes in various spheres of public life, especially in politics and the economy, were largely determined by legal anarchy, 'the war' of all-Union and republican laws and other normative acts.

"There is now a situation when the republic has two opposing procurator's offices, each of which is investigating criminal and administrative cases. Republican militia is also split. These bodies are now being involved in political confrontation to the detriment of their main functions."

It was stressed at the news conference that contradictions between the republic and the Centre negatively influenced the Latvian KGB's activities.

Speakers noted that some political groups and republican legislators are making steps to set up an alternative state security service. Groundless attacks on the Latvian KGB are made in the mass media, including by senior officials.

'Russian Community' Established in Latvia

LD2303202691 Moscow Central Television Vostok Program and Orbita Networks in Russian 1530 GMT 23 Mar 91

[From the "Vremya" newscast]

[Text] A Russian community [Russkaya obshchina] has been set up in Latvia. It will unite those who are related by the Russian language and the centuries-old culture of the fatherland. The community wishes to show by deeds that Russians in Latvia are not a negative, but a positive factor. It is counting on the support of Russians living in the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic and in other republics of the country, as well as abroad.

Lithuania Protests Union Troops' 'Provocations'

Landsbergis Protests 'Wild Rampage'

PM2203144991 Vilnius EKHO LITVY in Russian 13 Mar 91 p 1

["Lithuanian Supreme Council Presidium Statement on USSR's Continuing Aggression Against the Independent Lithuanian Republic"—EKHO LITVY headline]

[Text] Of late an increase in the number of USSR KGB troops and USSR internal troops has been noted in Lithuania, along with an increase in movements by armored personnel carriers and other units of the USSR Armed Forces on Lithuania's highways and on city streets and the wild rampage of armed military patrols, which has taken the form of their firing on, arresting, and assaulting passersby, stealing from them, and baiting them. This constitutes fresh provocation against the Lithuanian Republic, which has once again increased the threat to the security of people's lives and health. These actions on the part of the USSR Armed Forces, which are reminiscent of what happened this January in Vilnius, have justifiably provoked universal anxiety, concern, and legitimate indignation in Lithuania. Events of this kind have become more frequent with the approach of the 17 March USSR referendum.

TASS disinformation reports about an imaginary concentration of fighters in Lithuania and preparations to forcibly disrupt the organization of the illegal referendum, along with statements by the leaders of CPSU subdivisions in Lithuania regarding aid from USSR troops in conducting the referendum, like the demands made by the "Soyuz" group of USSR people's deputies for the president to create "normal" conditions for the referendum "throughout the Soviet Union," clearly alluding to Lithuania—all this obviously attests that Soviet militarists and conservative Communists are, on the pretext of the referendum, preparing fresh, wide-ranging armed provocation against the independent Lithuanian state. The provocation aims to overthrow the legitimate authorities and once again forcibly introduce Soviet rule in Lithuania and impose alien laws.

In an endeavor to draw world public attention to the increasing provocations and the continuing escalation of USSR armed aggression, the Lithuanian Supreme Council Presidium states: The Lithuanian authorities together with Lithuanian people will defend the restored independent Lithuanian state and its citizens' freedoms and rights with all their might and available resources.

In the face of this danger the Lithuanian Supreme Council Presidium urges all countries' democratic governments to give the USSR leadership a severe warning and curb the USSR's fresh attack on free Lithuania. At the same time we warn that the USSR and its leaders will bear responsibility for possible future victims of aggression, people's misfortune, and crimes against the Lithuanian state and mankind.

[Signed] V. Landsbergis, chairman of the Lithuanian Supreme Council

Leaders See 'Very Complex' Problem

LD2203103191

[Editorial Report] Vilnius Radio Vilnius in Lithuanian at 1810 GMT on 21 March broadcasts a report on a news conference at the Lithuanian Supreme Council given by Deputy Prime Minister Vaisvila, Procurator General Paulauskas, and Director General of the Defense Department Butkevicius. During the news conference the deputy prime minister said:

"First of all, the problem of the so-called special squad [OMON] of the USSR Ministry of Internal Affairs is very complex. You know the history of how it came into being. It is obvious that its existence is very useful to someone who is interested in destabilizing the situation. Since we succeeded in cooperating both on Monday's events concerning the detention of Deputy Butkevicius and last night on another incident committed by this squad, a picture is emerging that both the leaders of the USSR Ministry of Internal Affairs and their deputies here—I have in mind the leadership of the division of interior troops—do not, it seems, exert control over this unit, and they acknowledge it. Yesterday, in examining the previous night's events, the leadership of Interior Troops Division No. 404, the headquarters of which is in Vilnius, acknowledged that they knew nothing about the activity of this unit. This shows that this squad is being manipulated by external forces."

Vaisvila went on to say: "We are well aware that anything can happen at any minute. Last night [20 March] was very uneasy. About 0200-0300 there were many patrols. Sometimes it was difficult to know who was patrolling—the Soviet Army, the interior troops, or the patrol of that break-away militia squad. So, we can expect anything. We are trying to preserve calm. Today the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, instructed by the government, had to send a protest note to the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs concerning last night's events."

For his part, the general director of the country's Defense Department, Butkevicius, answering questions from journalists, stated:

"Whom does the OMON structure in Lithuania serve? It is the main destabilizing factor of the situation today. And if the negotiations begin between the Republic of Lithuania and the Soviet Union, it will be a lever in the hands of the Soviet Union which will all the time try to destabilize the situation and exert psychological pressure and coercion".

Answering a journalist's question on relations with the Soviet Army ledership, General Director Butkevicius stated:

"I would describe the situation as follows: We are aware that the Soviet Union's military units are present here in Lithuania. We do not like it, but it is a fact. In the same way, they do not like the fact that the country's Defense Department has emerged in Lithuania, but they are compelled to acknowledge that it is a fact, and step by step have to start talking. There were consultations in Moscow prior to the negotiations. We have tried to explain the situation to the chief of the General Staff, General Moyseyev, and his officers. They knew with whom they were talking. At present the situation is such that the commanders of military districts have asked to provide certification for soldiers who have deserted them to prove they are doing military service in the Republic of Lithuania. So, we are not officially recognized but the certificates which we issue fully satisfy a commander of the Soviet Army as to where his subordinates have gone. I think that these are the first steps and that the next steps will follow."

In answer to a question about military activity in Lithuania, Butkevicius replied: "Additional armored units are arriving in Lithuania. Recently, more than 200 pieces of military equipment were unloaded in southeastern Lithuania. The hardware is being constantly checked and used in the northern suburb of Vilnius. We never know whether this is the beginning of new exercises, a reallocation, or some new operation being prepared by the Soviet Army. But we are convinced, and we notice, that each political step taken by the Soviet Union's leadership coincides with increased activity by the military."

Vagnorius Cables Pavlov, Yazov

PM2203155791 Vilnius EKHO LITVY in Russian 13 Mar 91 p 1

[Cable from Lithuanian Prime Minister G. Vagnorius to USSR Prime Minister V. Pavlov and Defense Minister D. Yazov; date not given: "To USSR Prime Minister V. Pavlov and Defense Minister D. Yazov"]

[Text] Despite assurances about preventing offenses by Soviet Army servicemen on Lithuanian territory, these offenses are taking place. Drunken servicemen assaulted civilians in Vilnius in the morning of 9 March this year. Firearms were used and injuries were sustained. The Lithuanian Government voices a resolute protest at such actions by Soviet Army servicemen—actions that pose a direct threat to citizens' lives and health—and demands that all steps be taken immediately to punish the culprits and prevent them repeating these acts. The Lithuanian Government warns that the Soviet military leadership bears all responsibility for any consequences.

Troops 'Provoking,' 'Terrorizing'

PM2203162991 Vilnius EKHO LITVY in Russian 15 Mar 91 p 1

[ELTA report: "At the Republic Government"]

[Excerpt] The leadership of USSR troop units stationed in Vilnius was invited to the Lithuanian Government's 13 March session to find a constructive solution to problems perturbing the republic's government and public that have been provoked by aggressive actions on the part of some servicemen. Representatives of the military leadership refused to attend. Prime Minister Gediminas Vagnorius, who chaired the sitting, said that they were acting like an occupation army by not attending the session.

Arunas Paulauskas, republic prosecutor general, informed the session that Soviet troops, particularly Special Purpose Militia Detachment men who deserted to USSR MVD [Ministry of Internal Affairs] units from the Lithuanian police, have of late been increasingly provoking Lithuanian police and territorial protection officials and terrorizing civilian inhabitants—dozens of criminal proceedings have been instituted and appeals have been made to the USSR leadership. The Soviet military leadership, however, is not taking the proper steps to suppress these provocations.

The Lithuanian Government instructed the Lithuanian MVD leadership to take all the steps for which the law makes provision to defend police personnel against these attacks and weapons seizures. Steps to suppress illegal criminal activity by USSR MVD subunits were also discussed. [passage omitted]

Foreign Ministry's 'Strong Protest'

LD2303054391 Vilnius International Service in English 2230 GMT 22 Mar 91

[Text] Yesterday the Lithuanian Foreign Ministry made a note to the Soviet Foreign Ministry in which it expresses a strong protest on behalf of the government over the criminal acts of the black berets in Vilnius on 20 March. The note accentuates that armed officials of the Lithuanian National Defense Department were attacked and gunfire was opened in busy streets at the rush hour. The wounded officials were forcibly taken to the military commandant's office and medical aid was allowed to be given only seven hours later.

The actions of the black berets clearly run counter to the commitment which the Soviet Union took on itself by signing the New Europe Charter in Paris, says the note of the Lithuanian Foreign Ministry. The actions of the black berets are characterized as armed terrorism.

Union Ministry To Investigate

LD2303132191 Vilnius International Service in English 2230 GMT 22 Mar 91

[Text] At a news conference, Lithuanian Deputy Prime Minister Zigmas Vaisvila said that high-placed officials of the USSR Interior Ministry will come to Lithuania to investigate into the activity of the Black Berets. He hinted there were signs indicating that neither the USSR Interior Ministry nor the commanding leadership of the Soviet Interior troops could keep the Black Berets under control.

Union Representative 'in Vilnius'

LD2303213191 Vilnius Radio Vilnius in Lithuanian 2000 GMT 23 Mar 91

[Text] The government press bureau reports that Deputy Prime Minister Zigmas Vaisvilas had a telephone conversation today with USSR Deputy Minister of Internal Affairs Nikolay Demidov, who assured him that according to information obtained by him, a representative of the USSR Ministry of Internal Affairs supreme investigation board should already be in Vilnius, although he is not certain of this fact.

In addition to this, Demidov stated that an order has been issued to the USSR Ministry of Internal Affairs Internal Troops Division, with headquarters in Vilnius, to return the arms that had been seized from the Lithuanian police two weeks ago.

Pugo Delegation's Absence Noted

LD2303001591 Vilnius Radio Vilnius in Lithuanian 2153 GMT 22 Mar 91

[Excerpt] [Passage omitted] According to information we have received previously, USSR Internal Affairs Minister Boris Pugo two days ago promised that his representatives would come to Lithuania to investigate the illegal actions of the special purpose militia detachment [OMON] in Lithuania.

This was confirmed yesterday by his assistant, Nikolay Demidov, who noted there will be three representatives.

The official institutions of the Lithuanian Republic have no information to indicate that the representatives from Moscow have arrived. In addition, the promises that today it would be possible to reclaim the arms that were seized by the USSR internal affairs representatives from six Lithuanian Internal Affairs Ministry staff members two weeks ago are also unfounded.

We have some information to indicate that OMON is again conducting patrols on Vilnius streets.

We remind you that the Lithuanian Supreme Council Information Bureau receives your telephone calls concerning observed military or OMON movements in Lithuania on a round-the-clock basis. [passage omitted]

Union Deputy Proposes 26 Mar Talks With Lithuania

LD2203160191 Vilnius Radio Vilnius in Lithuanian 1400 GMT 22 Mar 91

[Text] From the Vilnius Supreme Council to Landsbergis; from Vilnius to Prime Minister Vagnorius:
I propose to hold the negotiations of the USSR and Lithuania on 26 March in the Kremlin.

Such a telegram signed by Doguzhiyev, USSR deputy chairman of the Council of Ministers, was received in Vilnius on 21 March.

Commenting on it, Audrius Azubalis, spokesman for the Supreme Council, noted that the telegram did not contain any information or any reply to the question raised by Ceslovas Stankevicius, deputy chairman of the Supreme Council of the Republic of Lithuania, during his last meeting with Vitaliy Doguzhiyev, deputy chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers, about the buildings seized by the Soviet Union in Lithuania.

As is known, the Soviet Union's deputy prime minister promised to solve these issues in the near future. At present it would follow from the Soviet Union's position that there is a wish for the delegations to meet, but if it takes place we would be expected to confirm the absence of claims as regards the seized buildings. With this proposal, the Soviets are vitually imposing preconditions on us. Therefore, the Republic of Lithuania, proposes that working groups should meet to elucidate what authorizations have been given to the Soviet Union's delegation, on which issues it is authorized to negotiate.

The working group from Lithuania will most likely consist of three people.

Lithuania Accepts Proposal

LD2303054191 Vilnius International Service in English 2230 GMT 22 Mar 91

[Text] As we already informed yesterday, the Lithuanian authorities accepted the proposal of the Soviet negotiators to meet and discuss issues related to the beginning of inter-state talks. Yesterday a telegram came to Vilnius, to the name of Chairman of parliament Vytautas Landsbergis and the Prime Minister Gedimanas Vagnorius. In the telegram the Soviet Vice-Premier Vitaliy Doguzhiyev, who is also head of the Soviet negotiating team, suggested that the delegations of both countries meet in the Kremlin on 26 March. After a consultative meeting late yesterday night the Lithuanian negotiating delegation sent a reply to Moscow this morning.

The telegram expresses regret that the Soviet side has not yet given answers to a number of essential questions raised by the Lithuanian deputy chairman of parliament, Ceslovas Stankevicius, as he met Vitaliy Doguzhiyev early in March. Among other things, Vilnius wanted to get answers about the powers given to the new Soviet delegation for talks with Lithuania and about the Kremlin's intentions to return the Army-occupied government buildings.

As no reply to these questions had come, the Lithuanian side noted in its telegram it was ready to send to Moscow a working group rather than the state negotiating delegation in order to clarify the Kremlin's stand on the given issues. The Lithuanian negotiators accepted the proposed date, 26 March, but suggested another place for the meeting. Not the Kremlin but the permanent Lithuanian mission in Moscow. The working group of Lithuanian diplomats is most likely to consist of three members.

Politicians View Lithuanian-USSR Problems

LD2403132691 Vilnius International Service in English 2200 GMT 23 Mar 91

[Excerpts] It seems Lithuania is already concluding its existence of not being accustomed to having such comfort as enjoying clear and quiet prospects regarding its future. However, pressure and anxiety have become even more intense following the tragic January events, than during the first months after the proclamation of the act of independence.

At a time like this, making a future prognosis is especially complicated. In spite of this fact, it is possible to attempt to foresee the events awaiting Lithuania in the near future, by following the changes in the Soviet Union, East Europe and finally, throughout the entire world.

Parliament Deputy Rolandas Paulauskas, who is a member of the nationalists' association, is convinced that we can expect a solution of problems with Moscow only after some major changes have taken place within the Soviet Union. [passage omitted]

Rolandas Paulauskas agrees that the Kremlin may give in to the temptation to solve all of its problems at one sweep—by introduction of a military regime to bring to heel both the Baltics and also, Russia and the striking miners. However, in the deputy's opinion, the Soviet military machine is no longer totally capable of carrying this out. According to Rolandas Paulauskas, it is possible that the activity in Lithuania of the military units and the Black Berets is no longer totally coordinated by a unified center, and much is probably taking place on the initiative of local minor military leaders.

According to another deputy, Lionginas Sepetys, a longstanding member of the Lithuanian Communist Party's Central Committee, currently a non-party member, the Soviet military's wilful actions and the recent attacks by the Black Berets are manifestations of a disintegrating empire, which can no longer halt the process that has commenced. [passage omitted]

Contrary to the opinion of many Western politicians, Lionginas Sepetys is convinced that a confrontation between Gorbachev and Yeltsin will help to avoid bloody conflicts and violent acts against Soviet republics seeking sovereignty—first of all, with Russia and then with the Baltic states. [passage omitted]

The near future is viewed considerably more cautiously by Romualdas Ozolas, a parliament deputy and deputy prime minister of the former government. Contrary to those deputies who spoke earlier, he warns that unrest in the Soviet Union and Russia can be very dangerous for Lithuania.

[Begin Ozolas recording] I think that the current situation in Lithuania depends on the situation in the Soviet Union, more than ever before. Based upon what I know and what I can conclude from that, regarding this matter, by assessing the viewpoint of the widest and greatest perspectives, I can state one thing: Intensive preparations are underway within the Soviet Union for a decisive conflict for the preservation of the Soviet Union's power.

The Soviet Union, as is currently demonstrated by its reasoning, is not, under any circumstances, disposed to release anybody from its clutches—be it Georgia or the Baltic countries. Should Gorbachev attempt to do this, the generals will oppose it. Thus, it is for this—for this possibility of opposition, that the military leadership is currently undergoing intensive preparations. What is currently happening on our streets, with the OMON [special purpose militia detachment] is the clearest indication of this. What is especially dangerous are the specific demands of the striking miners to remove the president. I am almost certain that these demands have been foisted upon the workers by those forces that are interested in reactionary victory in the Soviet Union; and raising such demands and making such attempts at bringing this about will unavoidably lead to introduction of military dictatorship. [end recording]

I also asked Romualdas Ozolas whether, in his opinion, Lithuania should not also physically oppose the Soviet Union's attempts to disarm the Lithuanian police and to inflict a blow upon the structures of the country's defense department by the hands of the Black Berets.

[Begin Ozolas recording] Currently, Lithuania cannot carry out such actions; however, once the USSR president has been officially admonished to control his military forces' rampages here, and he does not do this and does not put an end to OMON rampages, Lithuania will have both the moral and the legal right to take such action. I think the time will have come then to take such action, not as a possibility but as a necessity. [end recording]

Lithuanian Prime Minister Holds News Conference

PM2203120191 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 22 Mar 91 Union Edition p 3

[Report by Nikolay Lashkevich: "Lithuania Has Announced Price Increase"]

[Text] Vilnius—As of 26 March, prices for food will be increased in Lithuania. Prime Minister G. Vagnorius told journalists this at a news conference.

There was no specific mention of at what level prices will be set, but they will not differ substantially from the new all-Union prices. A price increase for Lithuania was planned for March. In late February, compensation for the republic's citizens began. But later it was decided to wait until the start of the all-Union prices reform. Therefore, the monetary compensation for March was, in fact, handed out for nothing. Nonetheless, the government will probably not take it back from the population, continuing the payment in April, too.

Has the price reform been coordinated with the Union government? What are the prospects for dialogue between the Lithuanian and USSR Governments? Answering these questions put by your correspondent, the prime minister stressed the importance of coordination between the two governments' on economic questions. The republic has informed the Union Cabinet of Ministers of the forthcoming price reform in Lithuania and does not rule out the possibility of consultations on economic problems. G. Vagnorius expressed favor for more intensive bilateral relations, even at the government-head level. The main obstacle on the path of dialogue is the seizure of civilian establishments—they are still under the control of the military.

The tension in Lithuania is not abating. On Wednesday evening, there was another incident in central Vilnius between the special purpose militia and territorial protection department personnel. A special-purpose militia detachment stopped a bus in which a group of department workers was traveling. Weapons were used while the bus was detained. Three department personnel members were wounded and one of them has been hospitalized in serious condition. Two men were taken to the military commandant's office.

Lithuanian Leaders Receive U.S. Diplomats

PM2203141391 Vilnius EKHO LITVY in Russian 13 Mar 91 p 1

[ELTA report: "Reception of U.S. Diplomats"]

[Text] Vytautas Landsbergis, chairman of the Lithuanian Supreme Council, on 11 March received Richard Miles, U.S. consul general in Leningrad, and (George Krol), consul in Leningrad.

The U.S. diplomats were familiarized with the political situation in Lithuania and hostile forces' attempts to fuel tension. Richard Miles in turn said that he had just returned from Washington, where he briefed the U.S. Government on events in the Baltics. According to him, the U.S. Government is displaying great interest in recent events in Lithuania.

On 11 March Lithuanian Prime Minister Gediminas Vagnorius received Richard Miles, U.S. consul general in Leningrad, and (George Krol), consul in Leningrad.

RSFSR

Further Reportage on Reaction to Food Shortages

Siberia Bans Exports

LD2203140791 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1200 GMT 22 Mar 91

[Text] It seems that a war of territories has started in Siberia. Despite the so-called Siberian accord signed by leaders of krays and oblasts, all regions have prohibited exporting food beyond their borders and have established cordons on railroads and motorways.

Sverdlovsk Reportedly 'Calm'

LD2203212491 Moscow World Service in English 2000 GMT 22 Mar 91

[Excerpt] [Passage omitted] A police official in Sverdlovsk denied speculations of looting. Colonel Andropov said no shop lootings or riots were reported, adding that the situation was calm for the time being.

Leningrad Protest Urges Reforms

LD2403204591 Moscow All-Union Radio First Program Radio-1 Network in Russian 1900 GMT 24 Mar 91

[Text] We have already told you today about the Sunday meetings held in Kaliningrad and Volgograd. Now here is a new report on this subject.

A meeting for the social protection of citizens and against price rises was held today at Palace Square in Leningrad. Its organizers were the Soyuz group of deputies, the Russian patriotic movement Otechestvo [Native Land], and other public organizations in the city. Participants in the rally adopted an appeal to the USSR Supreme Soviet. The document, which was signed by 4,000 people, emphasizes that reforms to stabilize the economy, not price rises, are essential to lead the country out of this crisis.

Komi Discusses 'Acute' Shortages

LD2403220391 Moscow TASS in English 2030 GMT 24 Mar 91

[By TASS correspondent Victor Makarov]

[Text] Syktyvkar March 24 TASS—The parliament in the Komi Soviet Autonomous Republic met on Saturday to discuss an acute food shortage in the area.

The legislature passed a special resolution on measures to stabilise the situation on the consumer market.

It formed a special commission on food. Lawmakers told parliament chairman Yuriy Spiridonov to inform President Mikhail Gorbachev and Russian President Boris Yeltsin that the food crisis was caused by the unwillingness of other republics to provide food products to the region.

In response, the Komi Republic decided to stop the delivery of industrial goods and raw materials to other regions.

The Komi parliament ordered all enterprises and organisations situated in the republic to donate 15 per cent of their output to the republican market fund of material-technical resources. They will be used to buy food and animal feed.

The parliament also charted measures to develop farming in the republic.

Yeltsin's Visits Leningrad Machine-Building Plant

Listens 'Carefully' to Views

LD2203134191 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1131 GMT 22 Mar 91

[Text] We have finally managed to link up with Leningrad. Our correspondent Nikolay Artemev is there. His task is to follow and give us information about the visit to Leningrad by Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin. Our correspondent Nikolay Artemev is on the line:

[Artemev] Early this morning before the actual start of the work shift, Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin arrived at Kirovskiy Zavod. It is the largest machine-building production plant in Russia. He visited the workshops, talked with the workers, and visited the workers' restaurant. His meeting with the works' leadership and with workers and specialists took place in the works' management offices. Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin listened carefully to their views on various questions. Among the problems that were discussed were the transfer of the works to Russian jurisdiction, halting party activity, setting up the production of minitractors for Russian farmers, giving the works tax privileges, and problems of personnel turnover. In a word, all problems, both production problems and social problems, were at the center of attention.

Near the works' management building Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin was warmly welcomed by the employees gathered there. At this moment, as I am presenting this report, Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin is meeting with deputies of the Leningrad City Soviet, while this evening, at the Gaza Palace of Culture—this is the Kirovskiy Zavod's palace—Boris Niklolayevich Yeltsin will meet with workers of this enterprise.

So that is how the trip to Leningrad by Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin, chairman of the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic Supreme Soviet, is taking place.

Meets Workers With Sobchak

LD2203173891 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1340 GMT 22 Mar 91

[Report by Radio Leningrad correspondents Andrey Zakharov and Irina Belyaeva]

[Excerpts] [Zakharov] At exactly 0650 [22 March], Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin, accompanied by Anatoloy Aleksandrovich Sobchak, chairman of the Leningrad Soviet, and Yuriy Fedorovich Yarov, chairman of the Leningrad Oblast Soviet, arrived at the Kirov works. After saying a warm hello to the administration and all the workers of the enterprise, especially members of the workers' committee of the Kirov works who, by the way, have invited the head of the republic to visit them, Boris Nikolayevich first of all has visited the foundry works:

[Begin recording] [Yeltsin] The congress was imposed on us. It was not needed now, when there is a sowing season under way. No, someone deems it necessary to hold a congress. There are speeches to be made at this congress—unnecessary speeches, incoherent ones. All during this very time, at least one week as a minimum, we should be having a congress. What for? It is simply necessary to shove Yeltsin aside. This is the main task being assigned because Russia is still holding on somehow, and, if they manage to tear him to pieces, this will be the end. Russia will be swallowed again and become, as it always was, an appendage to the center, and never will it be independent, never. Now, if only in a small degree... [changes thought] and it is only the very beginning yet, but at least Russia will have its independence. Even now, look at the compensation for prices. Interesting question you might have read; it is written: Russia should give 56 billion rubles [R]. But, we have calculated: it turns out that Russia should give R30 billion. All the rest—26 billion—is going to other republics. Have you read the second part there, where it is written: Uzbekistan to receive 8 billion. In other words, we give 56 billion while others are starving. Enough! It is time to stop living for others. After all, it is about time destitute Russia stops feeding other countries, other states, other republics, if we ourselves are poor and hungry. If your salary at the rolling mill is R300, is this a salary? Well, even 350. All the same, this is not a salary for a rolling mill worker. And so, we are now arguing that this should not be so, with Pavlov, who has visited you here, among others. According to (?our) estimate, you will receive R30 billion and not a penny more. Only 30, and 25 billion will remain here in Russia, and we will compensate Russia ourselves. Besides, what we also want during these hard times, since they have, after all, imposed the price hikes on us, this was not on our initiative, this is politics again. [sentence as heard] You remember when Ryzhkov spoke some time ago, he was shoved out. Then, Pavlov started this again and has eventually pulled his idea of the price hikes through, and moreover, the rises by several times over. Although this is succeeding now, there will not be a full compensation, of course. The prices will spiral upwardly madly, step by step, and it will be difficult to stop it later.

[Unidentified worker] Boris Nikolayevich, how did it happen that the prices have become unregulated? This means that the cooperatives will fleece us again.

[Yeltsin] I am simply against such policy. Without having their own economic program for getting out of this dead end, this chaos, this crisis which will follow the price rises, they should not begin the economic reform just with the people, with their salaries. This is a bluff; this is unacceptable. Here, I will finish. At least now, we will bring the arguments to an end after all with the R56 billion. We are leaving 30 to them and returning the 25 back to us. You can see the same thing happening with pensions. All the time, we thought that pensions were being derived from social security funds. Why the social security fund in Russia? Is the enormous (?republic) of 150 million people vanishing somewhere? At last, we have established that it is going to the Union, and there the redistribution, the levelling of everything, is taking place. We are short by R8 billion. After creating our own Russian pension fund and having retained our 8 billion, we have accordingly raised the pension straight away.

[Unidentified worker] Boris Nikolayevich, when will we have Russian sovereignty? When will we have a president who will be elected by the people?

[Yeltsin] First, you are the ones who decide this.

[Unidentified worker] The top brass who are ruling without our consent and going against the people should be removed.

[Yeltsin] It will be difficult to remove the Army, the KGB, but now we are taking over the Russian state security organs. At this referendum, you voted for the presidency. Thank you. We will keep our word, too. Now, the congress will only set the date of the presidential elections. There will be several candidates, and it is your business to choose.

[Unidentified correspondent] While Boris Nikolayevich talks to the workers, I approach Anatoliy Aleksandrovich Sobchak and ask him: What does the city expect from this visit by the chairman of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet.

[Sobchak] I will put it this way: This visit was at the invitation of the workers of the Kirov works. Therefore, perhaps it is first of all the workers who have been expecting the meeting with Boris Nikolayevich and wanted to hear from him personally how their problems will be solved. Everyone is worried about the questions of the declining standards of living, the compensations, allowances, and so on. On our part, we will try to solve a number of the city's problems. We had a visit by Pavlov. We have managed to solve the whole range of questions in the city and the oblast. As for the visit of Boris Nikolayevich, here too there is a number of questions which we are proposing to discuss today. We will have a joint session of the presidium of the oblast and city soviets. Boris Nikolayevich will be present at it. We will discuss a number of questions which we would like to solve, and perhaps this visit will facilitate the solution of these questions. This is an opportunity for us to accelerate the solution of certain city problems. [end recording] [passage omitted]

[Begin recording] [Balyaeva] Boris Nikolayevich, do you feel the support of the Kirov workers?

[Yeltsin] Obviously, I can see it from all sides. [end recording]

Addresses Workers

LD2203222591 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1910 GMT 22 Mar 91

[Address by Russian Federation President Boris Yeltsin to workers of the Kirovskiy Zavod plant in Leningrad on 22 March—recorded]

[Text] Esteemed Putilovtsy, Kirovchane, Leningraders! I always attach special importance to a trip to Leningrad and a meeting with Leningraders. Both becasue your great city is one of the major economic and cultural centers in Europe, and because the city born of the genius of Peter the Great and by the great toil and talent of the people today finds itself in a very difficult plight, and because Leningrad is known for its democratic traditions and the special spirit of freedom that imbues its inhabitants.

I want to sincerely thank the people of Leningrad and the workers of this factory for the support that they always give to the leadership of Russia, to the Supreme Soviet, and to me personally. This trip to Leningrad at this time is a special one, [words indistinct] of the workers' committee, collective, and leadership of Kirovskiy Zavod. The plant management and the members of the workers' committee and of the labor collective have examined the problems of the plant, examined its future, examined its life today and the problems that have to be solved and how to solve them. In fact, you have examined all these questions in sufficient detail, since a plant such as Kirovskiy and any fluctuations of it, in one direction or another, immediately influence Russia and all aspects of its life, like the weather, like climate, like the miners. There is much that is new and interesting that I must note, because when visiting many enterprises, especially those that produce or have been producing military goods and are subject to conversion, one hears nothing but whining, [words indistinct] what shall we do, what shall we do, what shall we do? Whereas today I have heard not what shall we do, but a precise program, what is envisaged, what measures are being taken today, and what is needed and how Russia can help. It is quite clear.

Today, of course, we have determined the future destiny of the plant from the viewpoint of its, all forms of its existence, you might say, and of its future operation. I also support with regard to switching to the form of a joint-stock company, that is quite a democratic and flexible form, not a form of harsh pressure, but a form of consultation—that is the first point. Second, you then, by a decision of your collective, of the conference and of the collective, are making a decision to come under the jurisdiction of Russia, i.e. to leave what was until recently your own ministry.

Second, you then, by decision of your collective, of your conference and collective, make the decision to go over to the jurisdiction of Russia. That is, clear your recently [word indistinct] ministry. We accept you with pleasure, moreover since you are Russians, and I think that you do not reject this. Accordingly then, there comes into action Russian legality, everything that is based on any special stimulatory taxes, or tax rates on profits, that is taxes on hard currency, that accordingly leaves a certain percentage in hard currency, especially during the [word indistinct] year or two when you will be assimilating new production; you need to finish the construction of a new factory shop and so on.

Today you have received the right to establish for yourselves, at contract prices, the price for tractors. This of course gives you great possibilities. I asked, you also need to ask, if you definitely go over to such a form as a joint-stock company, help will be given in this respect, in developing the whole system, to carry out the appropriate agitation work, and if it is necessary to go over to this form, is it important that there should definitely be some bosses hanging over you? No! But I want to confirm that by going over to Russian jurisdiction you will not take on any bosses, because we have no ministry here in Russia, and no one will command you. Relations between Russia and associations of enterprises will only be in the form of taxes. That's all.

It is necessary to solve the question of hard currency, because—I do not like to, of course I am often accused of criticizing the president, but I think that when there is cause why not criticize the president or anyone else, like me? He issued the decree and when he took hard currency away from enterprises this was a gross mistake. This was a mistake in reform when he did everything. You remember he carried out, and carried out, and carried out reforms, and when enterprises had amassed a little of their money in hard currency, he took everything and centralized it. The reforms ended with this.

Now Gorbachev has done the same thing. He has taken hard currency, taken it away, 40 percent into his centralized fund, and 50 percent for the Union government, and enterprises it turns out are left with five or so percent. What self-respecting enterprise will try to increase production for export for this five to 10 percent? It won't, of course.

That is an erroneous decree and as soon as associations come into the jurisdiction of Russia, it is our policy to give them preferential allocations of hard currency. I ask you to understand me. I am not egging you on. I am speaking only of the dozen enterprises, including some which have as many as 70,000, 80,000, 100,000 workers, which have gone over already, which have left the [word indistinct] of ministries and have gone over to the jurisdiction of Russia.

About some of our affairs. I will soon fly to North Ossetia tonight, and then I have to get back in time for the Congress of People's Deputies which has been foisted upon us by a group of deputies, Communists of Russia—it begins work on 28 March. The further development of Russia will depend, in many ways, upon its results. That is my firm opinion and, probably, the opinion of the whole country. One will have to determine one's position regarding the most important economic and political questions and adopt a clear stance. It has become clear in the past few months that it is impossible to find a compromise with those political forces, first of all in the center, which are not interested in changes. Hence my statement with regard to dissociation from the policy of the president who has gone to the right.

Your support is very important because the party mass media, PRAVDA, SOVROSSIYA [SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA] and a number of others, are slandering me so much now that only with difficulty can I be made out, so to speak, from a party viewpoint.

One must define one's position regarding the most important economic questions.

It has become clear in the past few months that it is impossible to find a compromise. If the readiness is expressed for dialogue, they say no. Likewise in the search for mutually acceptable positions. In actual fact, I met confederates of the president in (?Komi). Not one of them was simply for Russia.

They are also making promises. Promises were made three times that (?one and a half television programs) would be allocated. That is a small question which would not cost him very much, would not cost him anything. It is just a question of pushing a button. No, they make promises, looking you in the eye. [words indistinct] No!

In general, in practice, they are not displaying even the slightest wish to reach accord or to act in concert. Our proposal, made as far back as the second congress, for an end to the political struggle was immediately answered, as you will remember, by the call from the CPSU for people to emerge from the trenches without delay. They have now left the trenches and gone into the offensive. The right-wing, conservative forces, now headed by the central bodies of the CPSU and the Russian Communist Party, have attempted to get their revenge in several areas:

First, their behavior toward the Russian authorities. The third session of the Supreme Soviet has been blocked for all intents and purposes. A propaganda war, in effect, was launched against the Government of Russia. And even [words indistinct] for the resignation of the government. Unprecedented badgering of the republic's leaders has taken place. The policy of blocking Russia's legislative acts has been sharply escalated, and so on. In emerging from the trenches, they immediately decided to do battle on a general scale, to convene an extraordinary congress and to carry out, basically, a constitutional coup, even before [words indistinct] and, most important of all, before the Union and Russian referenda. They were very insistent that the congress should begin on 25 February, so that the dirty deed could be completed before the referendum. However, the session opted for 28 March. The objective was set of relegating the biggest republic to the political periphery.

There is to be a reorganization of Russia's organs of power. We shall approach this at this congress. The introduction of the presidency—thank you for your support at the referendum. The congress will decide when to hold multi-candidate presidential elections. It is not just a question of the president alone, however. You realize that the whole point is that all the organs of power—from top to bottom—should [word indistinct] their functions and powers. In other words, all chairmen—be they village, hamlet, rayon, town, oblast, republican, autonomous and so forth—the chairmen of all soviets will be elected immediately after this by the entire population of their respective rayon, oblast, or whatever. By direct suffrage. [applause]

I said that was the first area. [passage indistinct]

The second area is the Baltics. There was a proposal to establish puppet governments in the republics, not only re-animating [words indistinct] the imperial position of the Union leadership in this region, to carry out practically a second occupation, to teach a lesson to the disobedient ones of other areas of the country that do not want to belong to the Union or to sign the Union treaty.

Third, an equally resolute, cynical blow has been struck at glasnost. Look at what is going on: They are hindering the Russian media from doing their work. Merely transferring Russia's radio to the third program has denied a considerable section of the republic's population access to this channel of information. The question of television has not yet been resolved. In many, or in a number of oblasts, Russia's radio is even being specially jammed for those three hours—from 1400 to 1700 and from 2200. As for the humiliation of Leningrad television—of course, Leningrad television has officially appealed to the Russian Federation Supreme Soviet. We will support it and will together seek to (?separate) Russian or Leningrad television (?from Kravchenko). [applause]

At the same time, how can one man—our president—simply give away an asset which has been created by the people, mainly by Russians. How can he take all these facilities and give them to one television company which is controlled by the ninth directorate of the KGB?

The latest example is TSN ["Television News Service" program]. They have taken that off the air, too—and Vzglyad, and so forth. Who was the first to declare war on us? Who rose up from the trenches? Who is striving to restore a monopoly on news in the mass media? It is the Communist Party which existed before perestroyka. In other words, this is a return to the days before 1985, a return, I would even say, to the worst days of stagnation. An attempt is being made to revive the (?dead) old thinking. Basically, communist fundamentalism is taking shape. We are again being called on to march torward the bright future. We have already been marching [words indistinct] four years [words indistinct] although they were hungry ones—and now again to the bright future. [applause]

The fourth tactic they have resorted to is this. They have struck out at all sections of the population which are connected with new economic methods, [word indistinct] process of perestroyka. They have all fallen under suspicion. Arbitrary behavior toward them has been blessed in the president's decrees.

Fifth, the opportunities to use the KGB and the Army for punitive operations have been substantially expanded.

We can today review some of the results of the so-called emergence from the trenches. A most important conclusion is the fact that the right-wing, conservative offensive has drastically exacerbated the situation. The reasons are clear. First, it is a most deplorable fact that the president himself has assumed the leadership of this right-wing, conservative wing. Highly deplorable as it is, this is what has happened.

And so, the country has not received a constructive program for a solution to the crisis. What a great deal of time was spent in trying to persuade, to convince! No, nonetheless, the most talented 500-day program of Shatalin and Yavlinskiy was wrecked, crushed under the leadership of the president.

And what is there instead of that? Nothing! The country doesn't have a program. What did they begin with? With a price rise? We decided, nevertheless, to draw up our own separate program. Six groups have been working all this time on it. The program is now ready and will be tabled for discussion by the congress on 28 March. A massive social base for economic transformations is beginning to take shape. We already have millions of supporters of radical reform.

Of course, the democratic movement is uncoordinated at the moment. But it is gradually beginning to consolidate itself. Yes, indeed, we are late in dealing with this question. This consolidation has begun, however. Bearing in mind that the party has its own hard and fast organizational structures, the democratic movement should also, I believe, create its own people's party based on the masses, a parliamentary party which will be able to implement this democratic policy.

And in the Union question, which broke all records in its unequivocal nature, in the tactlessness of the formulation of the question and in the vagueness and confusion, on the whole, reflected in its policy, you know that the figures have been published, and the convinced electorate voted not for the preservation of the old union, not for the preservation of the system and its leadership, but for a genuinely new and renewed union. That 70 percent voted namely for that—a union deprived of the signs of an empire and of unitarian state.

If we do not destroy that system, it is useless to strive for something better, if only for the sake of our children and our grandchildren. [passage indistinct] The leadership of Russia is accused of hoping for the collapse of the union. One asks oneself, in what? Even a single act [word indistinct] which would be aimed at the collapse of the Union. No, (?if you are going to try to prove it) with Kazakhstan, the Ukraine, Belorussia...[changes thought] Yes, but we, after all, the president, came to you and (?declared) this and said openly...[changes thought] What are we, members of an underground?

Yes, if the [word indistinct] Union treaty goes ahead, we want to conclude a treaty with the four main Union republics, where there is 85 percent of the national income and of the country's products, and then to let the others join. [applause] The center can also apply to join. The center is today incapable of doing anything. Its economic power has always been based on the possibility of taking from the enterprises everything that they produced and then distributing it as it saw fit. That is where the power was.

You are therefore taking the first powerful step if you switch to the new status of a joint-stock company, and you will take the power away from them, the distributors. It is a myth that the (?whole) military-industrial complex is hindering the transition to a market economy. The military-industrial complex is not at all homogeneous. You can also be said to be part of the military-industrial complex. Are you not, however, willing to feed your families by earning, not from the production of arms, but from the sale of peaceful goods? You have an interest, I saw that for myself today from the report of the manager, the foremen, the leaders of the working class, the committees. If you were freed from all this petty supervision and this rigid [word indistinct] from above, [words indistinct] you could double your output.

Do not get in the way, however! Of course we do have our [words indistinct] work with everyone, certainly—but fulfill your pledges! The more so if you are accusing not those who were in command for six years, but those who have been managers for eight months.

In the end we will find with other countries those who will conclude treaties with us, with Russia. We have already found them. They do not want to conclude treaties with the union but they do want to conclude treaties with us—with Russia. After all, that is where the minerals are, and 150 million people, a vast territory—all this is a pledge fund. Russia has, after all, always been stable. Russia has been and Russia will be: of that I am convinced. [applause]

Time is working for the future, for the people, for each one of us, for a free and flourishing Russia, for a free and voluntary union of sovereign states. If we are together, success will be assured. I hope very much that the people of Leningrad, and the working people here at your plant, will be ever a reliable support for the future actions of both the Russian legislature and its leadership, for the sake of a sovereign Russia and its prosperity, and for the same of the people of Russia. Thank you. [applause]

TASS Highlights Remarks

LD2203184691 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1715 GMT 22 Mar 91

[Text] Leningrad, 22 Mar (TASS)—Boris Yeltsin, chairman of Russia's Supreme Soviet, has stated that his main argument at the extraordinary congress of the republic's people's deputies, opening 28 March, will be "a constructive action program and, if things are difficult, a direct appeal to the people."

Speaking today to the Kirov works association's work collective, in Leningrad, where he was visiting at the invitation of the association's workers' committee, Boris Yeltsin stressed that the future development of Russia will, to a great extent, depend on the results of this congress, which has been "imposed" by the Communists of Russia group of deputies.

The head of the Russian legislature once again declared that he dissociated himself from the policies of USSR President Mikhail Gorbachev, who, he said, "had moved to the right" and that it was impossible to find a compromise with those political forces "which are not interested in changes."

Boris Yeltsin accused conservative forces, headed, he said, by "the central bodies of the CPSU and the Russian Communist Party," of trying to take revenge. This, he believes, is the explanation for the blocking of the work of the session of Russia's legislature, the "propaganda war" against the republic's government, the "persecution" of its leaders, and the intensification of the policy of blocking Russian legislative acts. The chairman of the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic [RSFSR] legislature stated that this conservative wing is headed by the USSR president himself.

Boris Yeltsin repeated the appeal he made earlier for the establishment of a mass legislative party to counteract the Communists. He also stated his readiness to stand for president of Russia if, as he put it, he is not "thrown out" at the Congress of RSFSR People's Deputies, which opens 28 March.

Answering a question about the meeting which failed to take place between him and U.S. Secretary of State James Baker, Boris Yeltsin, said that the United States "has behaved rather provocatively" since the victory in the Persian Gulf war, noting that not one head of a republican parliament went to the meeting.

Touching upon the so-called northern territories issue, in regard to Mikhail Gorbachev's coming visit to Japan, Boris Yeltsin informed the participants of the meeting that he had proposed to the USSR president that one of the republic's leaders be included in the official delegation. Unless these conditions are fulfilled, Boris Yeltsin said, Russia's leadership "will regard as invalid" any agreements on the territories which affect the RSFSR.

A considerable part of the two-hour meeting was devoted to problems of economic reform. Boris Yeltsin, in particular, called on the tractor builders to transfer to Russia's jurisdiction. USSR Prime Minister Valentin Pavlov, who was there earlier in the week, has already promised to grant independence this month to this Union-subordinated enterprise.

Answers Workers' Questions

LD2303175191 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1330 GMT 23 Mar 91

[Report on Russian Supreme Soviet President Boris Yeltsin's answers to questions from workers at the Kirovskiy Zavod plant in Leningrad on 22 March]

[Text] Yesterday Leningrad television broadcast a report on Yeltsin's address at Kirovskiy Zavod. I will briefly acquaint you with the replies by Boris Nikolayevich to questions inasmuch as, well, not everyone probably had the opportunity to watch the relay on Leningrad television. Regarding his address, we acquainted you with it in our broadcasts yesterday.

So then, many questions were asked, concerning both our internal affairs and foreign policy. First, about internal affairs: A question was asked about Yeltsin's attitude toward a Union treaty.

I am in favor of a Union treaty, Yeltsin stated, but in favor of a renewed Union and not in favor of the old system, which is thoroughly rotten. With regard to the draft of the new Union treaty, which has been published, this—in the Russian leader's view—is a 40 percent tougher system than even that which existed under the old Constitution.

To a question as to whether a renewed Union needs a president, Yeltsin replied that a union of sovereign states needs a small center consisting of only a few ministries. These ministries could work under the direction of the Council of the Federation. In Yeltsin's view, any sort of autocratic leader, still less one laying claim to great personal power, is not needed.

A question was asked about the position of some former autonomous entities, whose leaders intend to sign the Union treaty separately from Russia. According to Yeltsin, the Russian leadership advocates that all 16 former autonomous entities sign the Union treaty as members of a single delegation from the RSFSR. In his view, almost all will agree to that, except for two or three republics. In these republics it will evidently be necessary to hold a referendum as to whether the peoples wish to remain within the Russian Federation. Our task, Boris Yeltsin stated, is to keep Russia united and indivisible.

To a question about the rise in prices, the Russian leader remarked that this reform had been drawn up by Pavlov as long as three years ago, and was absolutely unacceptable. That is not how a price reform begins. I have not signed it, and I cannot take part in this, Boris Yeltsin said. He also noted that the Russian Government is examining a proposal to lower the taxation of enterprises from 38 to 32-33 percent.

Out of the questions concerning foreign policy, two have been singled out. The first is about Yeltsin's position on the problem of the Kuril Islands. According to him, during his latest one-on-one meeting with Gorbachev, Boris Nikolayevich insisted that the USSR delegation going to Japan include one of the leaders of the Russian Federation, and that the group preparing for the visit include the Russian chairman. If these conditions are not fulfilled, Russia will inform Japan that in the event of any agreements being signed that affect the republic's interests, Russia will regard such agreements invalid. What is meant, first and foremost, as I have already said, is the problem of the Kuril Islands.

And the second question: Why did Yeltsin not meet U.S. Secretary of State Baker? After the victory in the Persian Gulf the United States behaved provocatively, Yeltsin noted. Baker had invited the leaders of all 15 Union republics for dinner, and wanted to allocate five minutes each for information about the state of affairs. Yeltsin turned this down, and invited Baker to meet in the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic Supreme Soviet building. But the meeting did not take place.

On the whole, however, the Russian leadership's meeting with foreign leaders have become almost a permanent practice. If, agreements of a general nature are concluded with the Union, with Russia they seek to conclude specific agreements that will be fulfilled and will produce results—that is to say, a specific return. Russia, according to Yeltsin, is interested in developing direct lateral ties with foreign countries.

Meets Union, Russian Deputies

LD2203155191 Moscow All-Union Radio Mayak Network in Russian 1439 GMT 22 Mar 91

[Text] Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin, Russian Soviet Socialist Republic [RSFSR] chairman, is in Leningrad today. His visit to the city began with a visit to the Kirov factory. Our correspondent Matvey Frolov reports:

[Frolov] The Russian Supreme Soviet chairman looked around the workshops, chatted with workers and managers, and answered questions. The Kirov factory staff have something to talk to the republic's Supreme Soviet leader about: preparations for the establishment of the

Kirov factory's joint-stock firm, conversion and price increases, agriculture and the right to land, and many topical problems in the country's life that are worrying each staff member at the factory. Each citizen is interested in solving these issues. This unconstrained, acute, substantive, and interesting conversation lasted several hours.

Next, Boris Nikolayevich had another meeting; this time with USSR and RSFSR people's deputies and those from the oblast and city soviets. Comrade Yeltsin invited them to ask questions right away. There were very many on how preparations for Russia's Congress of People's Deputies are going, about an independent Russian security service, the transfer of gardens and allotments to private ownership, the creation of a free enterprise zone in Leningrad and the oblast, and many, many more.

Another meeting between Comrade Yeltsin and the Kirov factory staff began at 1700. This one was in the Kirov's palace of culture. It was a continuation of the dialogue begun in the workshops in the morning on the most important problems in the life of Russia and all our people. The meeting is continuing. It is being broadcast on Leningrad Television.

Yeltsin Visits North Ossetia, Georgian Republic

Arrives North Ossetia 23 Mar

LD2303112191 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1055 GMT 23 Mar 91

[Text] Vladikavkaz, 28 Mar (TASS)—Boris Yeltsin, chairman of the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic Supreme Soviet, arrived today in the capital of the North Ossetian Soviet Socialist Republic.

The programm for the visit by the head of the Russian legislature includes meetings with refugees from South Ossetia, with people's deputies from soviets of all levels, and with the republic's aktiv.

Urges Belief in 'Our Russia'

LD2303183891 Moscow TASS in English 1809 GMT 23 Mar 91

[By TASS correspondent Valeriy Shanayev]

[Text] Vladikavkaz March 23 TASS—Chairman of the Russian parliament Boris Yeltsin visited North Ossetia today. This is his first trip to the north Caucasian region, connected with the future of the multinational Soviet state, the political and economic situation in the country and the Russian Federation after the countrywide and Russian referendums, the tragic developments in South Ossetia and the emergency situation in North Ossetia.

Yeltsin visited the Ossetian village of Sunzha, the Prigorodny region. He had a conversation with people working at the local collective farm Druzhba (Friendship) and asked them numerous questions about the beginning of the spring sowing campaign, the implementation of the land reform and the social development of the village. Yeltsin had a conversation in Sunzha with refugees from South Ossetian villages. He said that he would take concrete and effective measures for settling the problem of the republic's refugees.

The head of the Russian parliament also met refugees from South Ossetia, who are living near Vladikavkaz. There he also promised them to help the destitute people who came from the Transcaucasian region.

A massive rally was held at the Svoboda (Freedom) Square of North Ossetia's capital with the participation of Boris Yeltsin. Its participants spoke about the future of the multinational Soviet state, the revival of Russia, the consolidation of all healthy perestroyka-minded forces and the settlement by means of talks of the complicated inter-ethnic problems in the north Caucasian region.

Addressing the rally, Yeltsin said that the trip to the Caucasus was not a "step aimed at gaining scores". "I have long promised leaders of the north Caucasian republics to visit the region, to acquaint myself with the life of the area in which social, economic and inter-ethnic problems are so acute," Yeltsin said. According to Yeltsin, Russia will make its contribution to the settlement of the problem of refugees from South Ossetia who are now in North Ossetia. "I shall speak about it today at a meeting with chairman of the Georgian parliament Zviad Gamaskhurdia in Kazbegi," he said.

Yeltsin believes that the forthcoming congress of people's deputies should firmly uphold further consolidation of the political and economic independence of the Russian Federation. "I shall resolutely struggle for united and sovereign Russia. I believe in strong and united Russia and urge all Russians, all working people of North Ossetia to believe in our Russia," Yeltsin said.

Yeltsin, Gamsakhurdia Reach Accord

LD2303211191 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 2003 GMT 23 Mar 91

[Text] This evening, in the town of Kazbegi in the Republic of Georgia, there was a meeting between Boris Yeltsin, chairman of the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic Supreme Soviet, and Zviad Gamsakhurdia, chairman of the Georgian Supreme Soviet. Following talks between the head of the two sovereign republics, there was a news conference for journalists covering Yeltsin's stay in the northern Caucasus. An accord was reached to sign a treaty between Russian and Georgia. It is intended to sign it before the end of April this year.

At the meeting there was also discussion of the situation in South Ossetia. The sides agreed to take the most energetic, coordinated actions to end the bloodshed.

Protocol 'To Stabilize' S. Ossetia

LD2403123191 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1100 GMT 24 Mar 91

[Text] We told you yesterday about the meeting and talks between Boris Yeltsin, chairman of the Russian Federation Supreme Soviet, and Zviad Gamsakhurdia, chairman of the Republic of Georgia Supreme Soviet. Today we received the protocol signed by the leaders of the two republics. Here is its full text:

During April 1991 a draft treaty is to be prepared for signing on inter-state relations between the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic [RSFSR] and the Republic of Georgia, and a working group is to be set up for this purpose.

As a result of their coordination of joint actions to stabilize the situation in the area of the former South Ossetian autonomous oblast, the sides have agreed the following:

The RSFSR Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Republic of Georgia's Ministry of Internal Affairs are to set up a joint commission within 10 days to study the situation in the aforementioned area and to objectively assess the situation by 20 April.

Before 10 April, the internal affairs ministries of the Russian Federation and the Republic of Georgia are to set up a joint militia detachment to disarm all unlawful formations in the territory of the former South Ossetian autonomous oblast. The detachment is to be entrusted with protecting public order in the territory until the situation stabilizes.

A proposal is to be made to the USSR Ministry of Defense that units of the Soviet Army be redeployed out of the territory of the former South Ossetian autonomous oblast.

The Councils of Ministers of the Russian Federation, the Republic of Georgia, and the North Ossetian Soviet Socialist Republic [SSR] are to immediately begin work on creating the conditions for the return of refugees to their places of permanent residence and to secure the restoration of the lawful local authority bodies.

The Governments of the Republic of Georgia, the RSFSR, and the North Ossetian SSR are to set up a commission to assess the losses suffered by the refugees and to provide additional material, technical, and financial assistance to compensate for these losses.

The ultimate aims of the commission and the detachment being set to restore peace and tranquillity in the area are to be considered.

A standing group is to be set up to monitor implementation of the present protocol and to consider issues that arise.

Visits Checheno-Ingush Republic

LD2403181891 Moscow TASS in English 1804 GMT 24 Mar 91

[By TASS correspondent Sharip Asuyev]

[Text] Grozniy March 24 TASS—Russian President Boris Yeltsin visited the Checheno-Ingush Soviet Republic in the Russian Federation today.

Yeltsin spoke at a huge rally, which began in the city of Nazrani thirteen days ago.

Participants demand the restoration of the autonomous status of the Ingush people, abolished in 1934 and the return of lands allocated North Ossetia after the Ingush people were evicted from their native lands in 1944.

Yeltsin offered help in restoring the Ingush autonomy, suggesting that territorial disputes between the Checheno-Ingush republic and North Ossetia should be tackled through negotiations, involving the Russian parliament.

In Grozniy, Yeltsin met representatives of the Checheno-Ingush republic's cossacks.

Chairman of the Checheno-Ingush republican parliament Doku Zavgayev, present at the meeting, said that despite certain destructive efforts, the republic remained calm.

The people of the Checheno-Ingush republic, alongside other peoples, will take part in the building of a renewed Union and the Russian Federation, Zavgayev said.

Silayev Holds 'Difficult' Talks With Miners

LD2303151591 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1300 GMT 23 Mar 91

[Text] Ivan Silayev, the Russian premier, has spent 24 hours in the Kuzbass. He said this was his first visit to the Kuzbass but it would not be his last. He was visiting a mine for the first time. Therefore, his main preoccupation was to learn about the miners' problems from the miners themselves, to see for himself the conditions of work and to hear about their problems and demands.

Ivan Silayev's difficult talks with the miners of Raspadskaya colliery, one of the biggest in the Kuzbass, lasted several hours. The mine has been on strike since 14 March. The strikers' main demands are political ones. To be honest, everybody expected that the Russian prime minister would appeal for an end to the strike. Behind the scenes I heard people saying that yet another boss had come from Moscow to seek a return to work. But during his meeting with the workers Ivan Silayev did not appeal to the miners to go back to the mines. He simply spoke about the Russian Government's program for extricating the republic from its economic crisis.

He finished his speech with the following words: To implement this program the republic's government needs a functioning economy. So, decide for yourselves.

An attempt to remove the Russian Government and the Russian legislature at the extraordinary Congress of RSFSR People's Deputies which opens on 28 March cannot be ruled out, Ivan Silayev said. If that happens, I reserve the right to appeal to you for support. At the moment we do not know what decision the miners made. I believe a decision on whether to suspend the strike or not should be made during the next 24 hours.

Discusses Meeting

LD2403000791 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 2005 GMT 23 Mar 91

[Report by correspondent Sergey Melyanchikov on Russian Prime Minister Ivan Silayev's visit to Kuzbass mines; date not given—recorded]

[Excerpt] [Passage omitted] [Melyanchikov] The miners spoke for several hours about their life and work. After them Ivan Silayev spoke, and unlike the other leaders who have come here from Moscow to persuade the miners to return to the pit face, Ivan Silayev told them about the Russian Government's plans to stabilize the economy. He did not promise abundance at the expense of other areas. As the Russian prime minister said, I cannot give you anything, because Russia is itself poor. The only thing that I can give you is freedom—more freedom to dispose of the output you produce. And as Ivan Silayev said, in the coming days the question of the possibility of selling an even greater proportion of coal at market prices will be resolved. Completing his account of the program for reforming the economy, Ivan Silayev said:

[Silayev] I do not want to foist my opinion on you, Esteemed Comrades. Moreover, I have no intention of laying down the law to you. But given this situation, when the government—or the Russian leadership—needs support, it is important that we start implementing this program with an economy in a state certainly no worse than it is at the moment. It may be almost decrepit, but all the same we believe it can be resurrected in a short time, and can get us all to a modern level that is worthy of our Russian people. Of course, if these processes continue—with the foundry workers having to stop, and the machine builders having to stop, which will again hit agriculture and the food supply—then the way I see it, it will be extremely difficult, not to say impossible, for us to implement it. Personally, I have profound respect for your cause; I am in complete agreement with it. But all the same we have to look ahead a little, and give the Russian Government the chance to tackle these tasks and get to grips with them.

[Melyanchikov] On the subject of the forthcoming extraordinary Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic [RSFSR] Congress of People's Deputies, Ivan Silayev did not deny that an attempt might be made to sweep away the Russian Government and the Supreme Soviet. But the government will put up a fight.

[Silayev] I promise you that we are formulating our proposals clearly, and will insist that they are adopted. Then, I believe, at that time—if we have trouble with anything—then we will call on you for help. [applause]

[Melyanchikov] After the (?two-hour) meeting with the miners, all of us journalists had one main question: What had the meeting achieved?

[Silayev] At any rate, I have come to the personal conclusion that the Russian Government must do considerably more than it has so far done. This is very difficult and awkward, but is the right thing, and is essential for the country.

[Melyanchikov] What happened after the meeting with the miners will provide sensational news in the local press for weeks to come. The director of the mine invited Ivan Stepanovich to his office for lunch. But the Russian prime minister refused, saying that if he was going to have lunch, then it would have to be in the miners' mess, so that he might understand the way the miners live. When he went into the canteen, he took his place quite calmly in the line, waiting to be served. Do try to trust me, just as the miners trusted the Russian prime minister: this was no idle gesture, playing to the gallery. This was a genuine desire to try the soup from the same cauldron that serves all the mine workers. He is perhaps right, for the miners' problems can be resolved here at the mine, not in a roomy office with a view of Krasnopresnenskaya Embankment.

After lunch, Ivan Silayev had a meeting with representatives from the strike committees, the heads of industrial enterprises, and Kuzbass people's deputies. He reiterated the position he had stated during the meeting at the mine. Here, apparently, everyone came to realize that the visit by the chairman of the Russian Council of Ministers was not an attempt to break the strike come what may, but a desire to help the miners. So, the Russian Government does not propose to improve living standards in the Kuzbass at the expense of other regions, but instead itself asks for help. Now it is up to the miners. What they decide will determine the future development of events.

These last few days spent in the Kuzbass have been so packed with meetings that I only managed to speak to the Russian prime minister in the airplane, to the accompaniment of the engines. Naturally, just like everyone else, I was curious to find out one thing: What is going to happen to the miners' strike? How will things develop?

[Silayev] It is difficult for me to tell you that they, following our meetings and conversations, will take any resolute actions. This will be shown in literally the next few days. But when I said that this strike has a second very harsh end, as they say —that is, the catastrophic disruption of many sectors of the national economy of the Russian Federation—this is, of course, extremely dangerous. Any subsequent reforms, taking into account the thoughts that have been set out, will, of course, be extremely problematic if the key spheres of our economy are finally brought down—which I actually said to the leaders of this movement—and we will await their reaction in the coming days.

[Melyanchikov] Ivan Stepanovich, you have been to the mine, and then to the soviet executive committee [words indistinct]. On the one hand, as the leader of the government, you are against the strike, and on the other hand, as an individual who is fighting for and supporting the sovereignty of Russia, you are to a certain extent even for the strike.

[Silayev] I find it difficult to say. It is even difficult to determine. In any case, if you like, in the first place I feel a certain human compassion, especially when I went—I had never been among miners before. I again understood the calamity of their situation, and so in human terms, I certainly understand them. It is difficult to talk about (?giving preference). We are currently talking about improving the situation of not only the miners, but of all the people of Russia, wherever they work—on the land, underground, in any sphere of the national economy. Of course, this action has certain catastrophic consequences overall for the whole of the national economy, and so it will be even more difficult for us to revive the economy, create the necessary social conditions for every inhabitant of the RSFSR. So this duality should, I think, be fully understandable, and I would simply like there to be some kind of logical way out of this situation. It is essential; I think it is also essential to the miners themselves.

[Melyanchikov] One of the miners said today: I will not live to see the radiant future, and clearly my children will not live to see it. So with regard to the future, when will we at least be able to stablize things?

[Silayev] Everything here depends on how vigorously we switch to a genuine market course. Here I again think—and I have started speaking of this—that there are two conditions here: first, to what extent our sovereign rights and independence are reflected in the Union treaty, within a union of equal sovereign states, as has been written in the declarations of practically all the republics and our [word indistinct]; and second, to what extent we succeed, including through the media, and primarily through the Russian media, in helping our citizens to renounce old views and old dogmas, and not only to believe us, but themselves to find their way in this, giving their support not out of patriotic considerations but out of logic, of thinking, so that they know what is needed in this situation to improve things.

So you see, these purely emotional utterances of his are quite understandable. They are in a difficult position—there is no getting around it. I want to reiterate that the labor of the miners deserves the most profound respect. It is hard, physical labor. The danger and the unhealthiness of the industry must be considered. This is a unique profession from the point of view of the psychological and physical strain. For that reason, I do fully appreciate his desperation, and the emotional outbursts: that neither he nor his children will live long. Of course, it is not quite like that: we hope that he will not only live long, but will be an active participant in these events. He certainly will, for he is full of vitality—and in my opinion he understands everything. He is sincere and honest. This leads people to entertain good feelings for him, and certainly for his children.

[Melyanchikov] [Words indistinct] active?

[Silayev] Yes, certainly.

[Melyanchikov] In the course of your meeting, you promised them nothing, not even additional supplies, unlike other leaders who have visted the Kuzbass. Is that your stance, or is it simply that there is no way of doing anything anyway?

[Silayev] Well, in fact, we could always get it from somewhere, and hand it over. It is more a question of my stance. In fact, it is their stance, too. They might have behaved rather differently had I not told them of the stance adopted by our government: that we want to give them the most important and most effective thing—the opportunity to dispose of, initially, at least some of what they produce in the way they see fit. That is the main thing that drives them. It is not a question of how the center regulates their pay. That is up to them. In market-based relations there are no problems here. Therefore they are aware of this, and it is this economic aspect of their demands that is coming to be heard more and more clearly. The demand that they be given the opportunity to manage themselves independently, and make more efficient and independent use of the product of their labor. I would say this is the most objective and economically wise idea from the miners. This is a great credit to them.

[Melyanchikov] Well, there you are. The government has taken a step to meet the miners half way. Now it is up to them. As yet, it is unclear whether they will decide to suspend their strike. But whatever they decide, one thing is clear: Should there be an attempt to unseat the Russian Government and the Supreme Soviet at the Extraordinary RSFSR Congress of People's Deputies, then the republic will be faced with something that not even the most horrific of horror films could conceive. But I do not want to play the prophet. I just hope that common sense will yet triumph at the extraordinary congress.

These past few days in Kemerovo you have heard reports from me, Sergey Melyanchikov, a correspondent for the news service of the All-Russian State Television and Radio Company.

Further on RSFSR Supreme Soviet Sessions

Yeltsin on Referendum, Miners

LD2203140391 Moscow Central Television Second Program Network in Russian 2018 GMT 21 Mar 91

[From a recording of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet 21 March session in Moscow. A summary of the full recording was published in the 22 March Soviet Union DAILY REPORT, page 61, under the headline "RSFSR Supreme Soviet 21 Mar Session"]

[Text] [Yeltsin] Now a few words on the questions that have been raised. Regarding measures to punish those leaders of oblast soviets and republics that made the decision not to hold the Russian referendum, this is not provided for by any of our regulations. What do our legislators have to say about this?

[Khasbulatov] Deputy Khasbulatov. As I was the chief elaborator of the referendum law, I will be so bold as to begin. Boris Nikolayevich is really correct in saying that no specific responsibility is envisaged for local soviets as collegiate bodies. We know that these decisions not to hold the referendum were made by some of the appropriate soviets. At the same time, I think that we can, and this is evidently appropriate, examine the question of perhaps even disbanding those soviets that violate a basic Russian law. Thank you. [applause, commotion]

[Yeltsin] You know that the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet made a decision on this issue and set aside the illegal decision of the republican and oblast soviets. This decision was made and it was also proposed to the Central Electoral Commission to carry out the procedure of the referendum independently, that is, in the areas under those rayon and town soviets that did not express the desire to take part in this referendum. This procedure was carried out. Even in those oblasts in which the decision was made not to hold it, practically over half of the population took part in the referendum and expressed their opinion. Yesterday you twice heard information from Kazakov, chairman of the Central Electoral Commission. After dinner we will listen to his results. Perhaps there will be a need to exchange opinions on the results of the referendum.

With regard to ratification of presidential decrees and laws that are contrary to decisions we have made and to our laws, it is not appropriate to sum them all up now. Let us entrust this to the committee or commission on legislation so that it, together with others and with the presidium, can prepare a list. It should give this list—and there could be various readings and various approaches—to you so that you can get acquainted with it. Then we can get down to this question.

With regard to the miners, I would like to make the following proposal. This process and these actions by the miners now are growing. Naturally, we cannot simply stand aside from this human, economic, and political action. I think that the Supreme Soviet should, if you support this, insistently demand that Pavlov enter into talks with the miners. If we are in principle in favor of this, let us vote directly. A short decision on this could be prepared before dinner. Then this short decision can be adopted and immediately sent to Pavlov.

Third microphone, please.

[Chelnakov] Chelnakov, constituency No. 16. Boris Nikolayevich, a few days ago I met Lukyanov and asked him why Gorbachev refused to meet the miners. I did not hear any convincing explanations. I think that we should demand that Gorbachev meet the miners because that is their primary demand.

[Yeltsin] Let me give an explanation. We have heard Denisenko and a representative of the miners from Chelyabinsk with regard to the resignation of the president as a political demand. But all the same, the first thing that they insist on is to hold talks with Pavlov. There is nothing about Silayev. If no success is achieved with Pavlov...[changes thought] There is no problem with Silayev. We stated...[changes thought] Miners came to see me, a group of miners from the Kuzbass, and I told them that we were prepared to accept them under the jurisdiction of Russia and then take the economic obligations on ourselves, but as far as concerns their political demands on the Union leadership, that is their business.

Therefore, all the same, I propose that today we adopt a decision to demand that Pavlov, chairman of the Cabinet of Ministers and prime minister, urgently hold talks with the miners and with representatives of the miner's collectives.

[Unidentified deputy] Esteemed Boris Nikolayevich, I understand that the miners are in a difficult situation and that talks between them and the government are necessary. But perhaps as well as adopting the decision that you are speaking about, we should appeal to the miners to go back to work in parallel with the start of talks, because today we are forcing Russia into a dead end. Today we know that metallurgical enterprises and many chemical enterprises are coming to a halt. This is very terrible. Let us think about this.

[Yeltsin] It is also wrong for the prime minister to refuse to hold talks for some personal or non-personal reasons. That is also unsuitable. He should hold talks. As I understand it, the miners will then begin work. The start is the most important thing. We should today demand that Pavlov immediately begin talks with the miners.

I ask you to get ready to vote. I ask you to vote to adopt the decision to demand that Prime Minister Pavlov, without delay, hold talks with representatives of the striking miners' collectives.

Good. Who is in favor of adopting, by a vote by name, this decision demanding that Prime Minister Pavlov enter into talks with representatives of the striking miners' collectives. Please cast your votes. The decision is adopted.

[Unidentified deputy] I wanted to speak about the subject of the vote, but I was not in time. I consider that everyone is fed up with the political struggle and its growing intensity. The same goes for the confrontation between the center and Russia, not to mention the struggle among the leaders. I had a second proposal here. Along with the talks, which undoubtedly should begin, the question should be raised of restoring order in the country, in Russia, and returning to work without fail. The general destabilization is affecting people so much that there will be no forgiveness for anyone, including those sitting here in this hall. I propose, therefore, putting a second question to the vote and also to named voting. We must even things out; we must appeal to the workers that alongside the start of talks they should resume work immediately.

[Yeltsin] We cannot demand this. You know, there are certain laws. We can only ask the miners to return to work before the start of talks.

22 Mar Proceedings Detailed

LD2303005391

[Editorial Report] Moscow Central Television Second Program Network in Russian at 1903 GMT on 22 March broadcasts a 79-minute edition of the "At the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic, RSFSR, Supreme Soviet" program, including recorded highlights from the RSFSR Supreme Soviet session in Moscow on 22 March.

The program opens with Ruslan Imranovich Khasbulatov, RSFSR Supreme Soviet deputy chairman, congratulating cosmonaut Manarov on his birthday and reading a brief biographic profile of Manarov. Khasbulatov then invites Deputy Yefim Basin, head of the Supreme Soviet's construction committee, to speak on a housing privatization draft law.

At 1904 GMT, Basin reviews the current housing situation, noting that: the square floor space allotted per person has increased since the 1980's; much of Soviet housing is beyond repair, thus making it necessary for much of it to be written off; and the lists of those waiting for housing remain long. Basin then proposes that housing stocks be privatized, before launching into a lengthy description of the draft law that has been tabled. He notes that the law aims to ensure that the demand for public housing is met and lists what should and should not be subject to privatization. He concludes by saying that the draft law will be submitted to the Supreme Soviet and that certain points of the draft law should be put to the vote. In response, Khasbulatov says an immediate vote on these points is unnecessary.

At 1919 GMT, Deputy (Molochkov) takes the floor, questioning some of Basin's statistics on housing stocks and on the waiting lists. He warns that the draft law may lead to society's segmentation and to many people dropping below the poverty level. (Molochkov) concludes by stressing that the law puts the poor and the pensioners at a disadvantage and asks that the draft be reconsidered. Deputy Ryabov follows, criticizing the draft law for not resolving the waiting list problem, not identifying those who will be responsible for taking care of housing, and not addressing the issue of state farm "company" residences or accommodation for teachers and doctors in rural areas. Ryabov concludes by calling for the draft to be reworked and published. Deputy Morokin then rises to speak, saying he agrees with Ryabov and pointing out that the law does not envisage remedying the building materials shortage.

At 1934 GMT, Deputy Kalistratov takes the floor in support of the draft law, saying that no nationwide discussion is needed and that the law should be passed as soon as possible since it is vital to other economic areas. He adds that there is no need for clearcut definitions of what people can have free of charge, that a purchase procedure should be set out in the draft, and that there will be a need for wage reform if housing is privatized.

Khasbulatov follows, reading a letter from a Moscow pensioner on the problems of communal residences before passing it to Basin and asking Basin to take the floor. Basin takes the floor and recommends that the draft law be passed in the first reading and then published. Several unidentified deputies can be heard from the floor, calling for the draft law to be put to the vote.

At 1944 GMT, deputies vote down the draft law in the first reading, with only 12 in favor. Khasbulatov then gives Basin's team one month to rework the draft law before publication, before reading a letter on "Arctic children."

At 1951 GMT, Medvedev, chairman of the state organization and interethnic relations commission, tables a draft law on rehabilitating repressed nations, which lays out criteria for identifying a repressed nation and addresses the issue of compensating damages to those that are rehabilitated.

Several unidentified deputies follow, asking various questions about the draft law. One deputy asks who will pay the damages and criticizes the CPSU for being the party which carried out a policy of genocide. Another deputy suggests the draft law list those nations subjected to repression, expresses support for cossacks being included on the list, and calls for debate on an amendment that would change national borders.

Deputy Chaykovskiy takes the floor, saying that, despite the fact that the team working on the draft law has worked on it long and hard, many problems discussed by the responsible commission, such as territorial problems, are not covered in the draft law. Deputy (Davzhiyev) then speaks on the Kalmycks and the repression to which they were subjected under Stalin.

At 2011 GMT, deputies vote in favor of the draft in the first reading.

Khasbulatov then invites Deputy Kondrashev to present a draft law on the militia in the second reading, who presents the draft and an amendment suggesting that the word militia be replaced by the word police. Deputy Bezrukov, the amendment's author, rises to describe the etymology of the word police, which he believes underpins the meaning of the word.

At 2021 GMT, deputies vote down the amendement.

At 2022 GMT, the program ends with Medvedev saying a few more words on the draft law on rehabilitating repressed nations and legislators again debating the draft law before voting overwhelmingly in favor of it.

Discusses Rehabilitation Bill

LD2203145491 Moscow World Service in English 1200 GMT 22 Mar 91

[Text] The Supreme Soviet of the Russian Federation, at a joint session of the two houses today, decided to begin discussing the bill on rehabilitating the people who suffered repressions during the years of Stalin's tyranny. Ethnic groups were falsely accused of collaborating with the Nazi occupation troops during World War II and were deported to desolate areas of Siberia, Kazakhstan, and Central Asia. The deputies stressed that it was the duty of the Russian parliament to approve a law on the full rehabilitation of the innocent victims and to pay compensation to them.

At today's session a report was made on the results of the referendum on introducing the post of president in the Russian Federation; it was stressed that the voting took place in a calm atmosphere and that more than two-thirds taking part in it supported the proposal.

23 Mar Session 'Blocked'

LD2303114291 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1105 GMT 23 Mar 91

[Text] Moscow, 23 Mar (TASS)—The session of the Russian legislature, at which it was intended today to adopt several important laws in their definitive form, including on the employment of the population and the social protection of Russia's citizens, has been blocked.

It has proven impossible to embark on the consideration of current issues for two reasons. First, sharp polemics have flared over Boris Yeltsin's speech in Leningrad yesterday. In it, the head of the Russian legislature ruled out the possibility of reconciliation with the country's central authority. The session took the form of mutual recriminations between Boris Yeltsin's supporters and those who condemn his stance.

Second, it was found that one of the chambers, the Soviet of Nationalities, did not have a quorum.

The supreme body of power in the republic, the extraordinary Congress of People's Deputies, will start work next Thursday. It is hard to say whether it will be possible to assemble the legislators for a session before then.

'Declaration of Main Principles' Work

LD2503104391 Moscow All-Union Radio First Program Radio-1 Network in Russian 0900 GMT 25 Mar 91

[Excerpts] The deputies of the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic [RSFSR] Supreme Soviet are working today in committees and commissions. I am calling our legislative correspondent, Olga Vasilenko. We are listening to you.

[Vasilenko] I wish to add for the sake of precision that the committees and commissions are not working quite as intensely today.

As you know, in the Georgian Hall of the Great Kremlin Hall, the registration of Russia's deputies has started, and they are now gathering in Moscow for their congress. It is to open on 28 March. Here in the House of Soviets at the Kranaya Presnya embankment, preparations are continuing for the congress. [passage omitted]

Currently the commission for the Union treaty is holding its sitting. It is considering a draft declaration on the main principles of the national and state order of the RSFSR. Admittedly, the document has been drawn up very recently. It is dated 25 March—today. That is the result of the work of the Council of Federation and of a special working group. The document is very serious and I will read out to you just the introduction to this document: In accordance with the RSFSR Constitution; on the basis of the concord among Russia's representatives of republics, krays, oblasts, and autonomous okrugs; relying on the positive changes connected with the proclamation of sovereignty by the RSFSR's republics, autonomous oblasts, and autonomous okrugs; and supporting their ambition to build the RSFSR and the USSR on the principles of equality and mutual respect, the Congress of RSFSR Deputies is adopting the following declaration.

I do not want to tell you any more about the contents of this document, because it is being discussed now very seriously. There are many contradictory utterances, and I do not even want to forecast the final form of the document. I just want to say that it will be discussed at the congress. What else can I say? At 1400 Moscow time the Presidium will be holding its traditional Monday meeting. And at 1600 the deputy groups "Left of Center", "Smena", "Nonparty Members", "Democratic Russia", and "the Workers Union" will get together in the Great Session Hall. They will also be obviously discussing preparations for the congress. This what is happening here in the House of Soviets.

Gorbachev Acts 'To Prevent Pressure' on Deputies

LD2403173991 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1645 GMT 24 Mar 91

[Text] Moscow, 24 Mar (TASS)—In connection with the forthcoming opening of the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic [RSFSR] Extraordinary Congress of People's Deputies on 28 March, 29 people's deputies of

Russia signed an appeal to USSR President Mikhail Gorbachev and to USSR Prime Minister Valentin Pavlov requesting that "measures be taken to create the necessary normal working atmosphere" for the preparation and holding of this congress.

"Experience of the work of the two previous congresses and sessions of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet shows that people's deputies are subjected daily to organized and intense moral pressure, both at their places of residence and near the congress hall," the document stresses. "Aggressive elements literally terrorize people's deputies. Frequently, things go as far as brute physical force, even directed at women. This has a negative effect on the overall atmosphere of congresses. Our frequent appeals to the chairman of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet, to his first deputy, and to the chairman of the RSFSR Council of Ministers requesting protection from wild outbursts and blatant mockery have been to no avail."

Having examined this appeal by people's deputies of the RSFSR, the USSR president gave the USSR Cabinet of Ministers instructions and authority to take all necessary measures to ensure due public order and calm in the capital, and to prevent any pressure whatsoever on people's deputies.

RSFSR's Isakov Assails 'Politician' Yeltsin

LD2403102391 Moscow World Service in English 0800 GMT 24 Mar 91

[Text] The chairman of one of the two houses of Russia's parliament, Vladimir Isakov, has strongly criticized the republican parliament's leader Boris Yeltsin in the press. Isakov claims that Yeltsin has to an ever greater extent appeared not as a national leader or head of a top body of state authority but as a politician who seeks to settle old scores with his political opponents. Isakov was one of the six leaders of the Russian parliament who came out with a statement criticizing Yeltsin and his policies last February.

Reportage on Khasbulatov 22 Mar News Conference

Vote Shows Willingness To Cooperate

LD2203201691 Moscow TASS in English 1957 GMT 22 Mar 91

[Text] Moscow March 22 TASS—The results of the referendum held in the Russian Federation on March 17 surpassed all expectations, Ruslan Khasbulatov, first deputy head of the Russian parliament, said today at a press conference for Soviet and foreign journalists. According to Khasbulatov, about 70 per cent of citizens of the largest Union republic, who took part in the voting, supported the idea of executive presidency despite "obvious pressure, exerted on electors by local authorities in some regions of the republic, which do not want executive presidency to be introduced in Russia."

Journalists were told that some 75 per cent of electors of the Russian Federation took part in the Union referendum. Official results will be announced on March 25, but according to preliminary information, 71.3 per cent of voters answered in the affirmative to the question about the preservation of the Soviet Union, 26.4 per cent answered in the negative and 2.3 per cent of the ballots were found invalid.

As for preliminary results of the republican referendum, a majority of citizens of the Russian Federation supported the introduction of executive presidency in the republic (69.9 per cent), 28 per cent opposed it, and 2 per cent of the ballots were found invalid. A total of 75.1 per cent of the population of the republic took part in the referendum.

Touching upon the relationship between the Russian authorities and the centre, Khasbulatov said that they "are interested least of all in confrontation with the Union." "By fully accepting the version of the question, submitted to the Union referendum, we showed our desire to cooperate closely with the Soviet parliament and the president," Khasbulatov added.

At the same time, he stressed that "disloyalty with regard to the Russian authorities, expressed sometimes, leads to the intensification of inter-ethnic clashes and the undermining of the very principles of statehood." "Unfortunately, some high-ranking politicians resort to absolutely impermissible methods of political struggle, trying to weaken their opponents," he added. He did not specify, however, who exactly favours such actions.

Khasbulatov reproved some mass media organs, which, in his opinion, are trying to draw a conclusion from the results of the referendum that Yeltsin's rating fell considerably. On the contrary, he said, "the results of the referendum clearly show that Yeltsin enjoys tremendous prestige among our compatriots and if he runs for presidency, he can count on victory."

Further on Remarks

LD2203235591 Moscow All-Union Radio Mayak Network in Russian 1830 GMT 22 Mar 91

[News conference held by Ruslan Imranovich Khasbulatov, first deputy chairman of the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic, RSFSR, supreme soviet; Kazakov, chairman of the central republican referendum commission; and RSFSR Procurator General Valentin Grigoryevich Stepankov in the RSFSR House of Soviets on 22 March—recorded]

[Text] [Khasbulatov] In several of our oblasts, attempts were made to prevent our Russian referendum from being held. Similar attempts were made in a number of our autonomous oblasts. There, indeed, the people were not offered the chance to make their will known. The upshot was that there were some quite grave, I would say, political events, not so much unrest or disorder, but something else. For example, in Checheno-Ingushetiya, the Ingush section wanted to vote in the Russian referendum. But, in the town of Groznyy, with the top administration, they pressured them and would not allow this referendum to be held. The people were all but split, two friendly peoples living in the same republic. A very grave political rift developed between them; clashes, you see. There was an artificially induced clash between the two peoples. In many ways, it was the same in Kazan. In Kazan, Tatariya, the official leadership refused to hold the Russian referendum. As a result, the town of Kazan organized a great demonstration against its own authorities. This disloyalty, which was, to some extent, provoked by the center, toward the Russian authorities leads to intensification of interethnic clashes. That is the first thing.

Second, it is leading to the very principles of the state being undermined, the very principles of statehood. Unfortunately, a number of even very high-level political figures, in trying to weaken the positions of their political opponents, have been employing totally unworthy methods in the political struggle, methods which have not, I believe, been employed in the civilized world for a good hundred years! At the same time, I would like to draw your attention to the fact that, even though Russia is a huge country with tens of different ethnic and state entities, autonomous and semiautonomous entities, we have not, thank God, had any major clashes. Actually, I was somewhat surprised at the outcome of the referendum. Almost 70 percent of those who participated supported the idea of introducing the post of president. I must tell you that this was a source of great surprise to me. That is one point.

The second thing I would like to draw your attention to: Of course, the ordinary people associate this referendum with a specific name. You know the name, the name of Yeltsin. This is genuine proof that the current Russian leader enjoys enormous prestige among our people, and if he joins the fray for the seat of president in the future, always assuming the supreme soviet and the congress decide on this, then he could probably bank on victory.

[Kazakov] The interesting thing is that in the four oblasts—not republics, but the oblasts of Stavropol, Ryazan, Smolensk, and Tambov—where the oblast session took the decision not to participate, we, acting on a decision by the presidium and by our electoral commission, called on and required the constituency commissions to ensure that the voting slips for both referenda were available at all polling stations. This was done. By and large, the referendum went ahead here, too. In Stavropol, some 66.5 percent voted yes; in Ryazan, 71.8 percent; in Smolensk, 63.6 percent; and in Tambov, 62.5 percent. I should tell you straight away that in the Union referendum the figures were roughly 20 percent higher. Nevertheless, throughout these four oblasts, the referendum went ahead and provided positive results. I believe the fact that the two referenda were voted on together had a positive influence on turnout. The turnout was high, and I believe we can congratulate our [word indistinct] on their success. Generally speaking, it wasn't bad for a first effort!

[Khasbulatov] Incidentally, a great role was played here by the work of our procuracy officials. Perhaps, Valentin Grigoryevich could...

[Stepankov, interrupting] It must be said that the new Russian law on the referendum and the new Union law on the referendum were being tested for strength for the first time on the territory of Russia. The procuracy officials had the serious task of enforcing this as yet little-known law by means of supervision by the procuracy. It must be said that there were very few problems that arose regarding the Union law. In fact, I could not even offer any serious problems. However, in a number of oblasts of the Russia Federation, the bodies of the procuracy were obliged to take a stiff, principled line on the illegal decisions of oblast, rayon, city, and even village and hamlet soviets. The procuracy officials had to explain the law, and whenever even that was insufficient, to register protests. In Stavropol, the procuracy bodies insisted on the soviet meeting again in a week, and in that time, after reading the Russian law on the referendum carefully and in detail, as well as the resolution of the Supreme Soviet on the referendum, it scrapped its illegal decision.

[Terekhov] A question for the procurator general. Yevgeniy Terekhov, from INTERFAX. Are there any plans for those leaders who blocked the referendum on their territories to be brought to justice and a question to Ruslan Imranovich: You spoke of your satisfaction over the outcome of the Russian referendum. Are you satisfied with the outcome of the Union referendum?

[Stepankov] Both the Russian and the Union laws on the referendum allow for both the criminal and administrative culpability of specific individuals who permit infringements of the law on the referendum. While it was being drawn up, we warned that, if there are any infringements, steps will be taken of both a criminal and an administrative nature. In some of the instances that I know of—not all have been investigated thoroughly—the decisions were taken by collective bodies. In such instances, no criminal or administrative charges can be made against any individual. But, investigations are stil being made by procuracy bodies in a number of rayons and towns where voting slips were not distributed.

[Terekhov] Thank you.

[Khasbulatov] I would like to answer your question as to whether I am satisfied with the outcome of the Union referendum. I assure you that I am as satisfied with it as with our Russian referendum. Both the Union and the Russian referenda generally provide us with the possibility of speaking about a stabilization of the political situation in Russia and the country. When all is said and done, the will of the vast majority of people for unity was voiced in these referenda, the desire for normal power and normal relationships between the leaders.

Judge for yourselves, from the political angle and from the view of many factors, the population and our sheer physical size, and by virtue of many other factors. We are the most steadfast supporters of a truly new union. The question is: What sort of union should it be? That is what it is all about. Who ought to be a member of this union? What rigths are we going to hand over to the central administration, and what rights are we going to hang onto for ourselves? That's what it's all about. Our citizens realize full well that we need to live in unity. Only then can we escape rapidly from the very difficult economic, political, and I might even say moral crisis that has engulfed us, particularly in recent years.

'Democratic Russia' Manezhnaya Square Rally Okayed

PM2403135791 Moscow KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA in Russian 23 Mar 91 p 1

[Report: "Manezhnaya Square Rally To Go Ahead"]

[Text] The Moscow City Soviet Executive Committee examined 22 March the application from the "Democratic Russia" movement coordinating council to hold a rally in Manezhnaya Square 28 March. The 21 March USSR Supreme Soviet resolution stating that the rally should not be held on that day was also examined.

Given that the application to stage the rally was submitted by the rally organizers 10 days in advance—in accordance with the law—and that a large number of people will probably be taking part in the rally, the Moscow City Soviet Executive Committee has given permission for it to go ahead.

Organized To Support Yeltsin

LD2403230591 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1900 GMT 24 Mar 91

[Text] As we were informed by Democratic Russia today, the Moscow Soviet executive committee has given permission for a rally in the city center on 28 March despite the USSR Supreme Soviet's suggestion that it not be held. The request was submitted by the coordinating council of the Democratic Russia movement. Thus, there will be a mass demonstration in Moscow on 28 March in support of Boris Yeltsin and of the sovereignty of Russia.

What is going to happen? Picketing of the Spasskiye, Nikolayevskiye, and Troitskiye gates of the Kremlin is planned starting at 0900. At 1745, columns of demonstrators are to begin assembling at squares near the Mayakovaskaya and Arbatskaya metro stations. At 1800, the columns will move off for Manezh Square where a short rally is to take place at 1830. A column will then proceed to Red Square, where congress deputies will be handed petitions from labor collectives.

Moscow Radio on Rallies

LD2403172391 Moscow All-Union Radio First Program Radio-1 Network in Russian 1600 GMT 24 Mar 91

[Text] Sunday rallies took place in some towns. Participants in a rally of working people held in the country's westernmost oblast, Kaliningrad Oblast, instructed their representatives who are about to depart for the extraordinary congress of the people's deputies of the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic [RSFSR] to support the new Union treaty and to demand that the leadership of Russia sign the treaty as soon as possible. The rally was held at the initiative of the town council of secretaries of party organizations of the RSFSR Communist Party. It attracted thousands of people to the Ploshchad Pobedy, including those who arrived from the oblast.

At the same time, an unsanctioned, alternative rally was held at the square. Several dozen participants in this rally protested the price reform, favored solidarity with the striking miners, and called for absolute sovereignty for Russia and for the election of Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin as its president.

In Volgograd, about a 1,000 people, among whom many came on this sunny Sunday just to rest on the banks of the Volga, attended a rally in support of the striking miners. It was held under the slogan: Miners' demands are our demands.

Moscow Labor Collectives Meeting Supports Strike

LD2203160191 Moscow All-Union Radio First Program Radio-1 Network in Russian 1400 GMT 22 Mar 91

[Text] The union of USSR labor collectives held a conference in Moscow today. A representative of the Kuzbass Bolshevik mine strike committee spoke before those assembled. Two days are enough for us, he said, to bring all coal production to a halt. An appeal by the interregional miners' strike committee was read out. It contains a political demand for the Union leadership to resign.

This time the conference was devoted to the extraordinary Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic Congress of People's Deputies. Therefore only Russian enterprise representatives were invited. The question of supporting the miners' strike and conducting a general warning strike on the union scale were points on the agenda.

In a rush of emotions some speakers suggested halting all factories and enterprises in the country for 48 hours, thereby forcing the president and the government to resign.

After a discussion a resolution was adopted to hold a general warning strike in the USSR in the near future.

Western Republics

Majority Vote Yes on Referendum in Ukraine

LD2203175391 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1453 GMT 22 Mar 91

[By UKRINFORM-TASS correspondent Aleksey Petrunya]

[Text] Kiev, 22 Mar (TASS)—The Central Election Commission for the USSR referendum in Ukraine reported today that the majority of the population of Ukraine voted for a renewed union and a sovereign Ukraine as part of it.

According to the commission's information, 31.5 million citizens, or 83.5 percent of those who received ballot papers, took part in the voting on 17 March. Of these, 22 million, or 70.16 percent, answered "yes" on the union ballot paper and 8.8 million, or 27.99 percent, answered "no."

The republican referendum was held on the territory of Ukraine simultaneously with the all-Union one. Those taking part had to answer the question: "Do you agree that the Ukraine should be within the Union of Soviet sovereign states on the basis of the Ukriane state sovereignty declaration?" About 31.5 million, or 83.48 percent, of the citizens who received ballot papers took part in the poll and 25.2 million, or 80.17 percent, answered "yes" on the republican ballot paper and 5.6 million, or 17.97 percent, answered "no."

Poll Shows Ukrainians Prepared To Strike

PM2503095191 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 22 Mar 91 Union Edition p 1

[INTERFAX report: "Alarming Sociology"]

[Text] Over two thirds of the adult population of the Ukraine is ready to take part in a strike if there is a substantial deterioration in the living standard. This was shown by the results of a poll of the republic's population carried out by the Ukrainian branch of the all-union center for the study of public opinin. Over half those polled also stated their readiness for mass resistance to the authorities if the social benefits provided for them are reduced, INTERFAX reports.

Crimean Government, Supreme Soviet Formed

LD2303131791 Moscow TASS in English 1149 GMT 23 Mar 91

[Text] Simferopol March 23 UKRINFORM-TASS—The first session of the Supreme Soviet of the restored Crimean Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic endorsed a decision that starting from March 22 deputies, who were elected to the Soviet of the Crimean region last year, gain the status of the people's deputy of the Crimean Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic [ASSR].

The status of governing bodies was also changed. The regional soviet was transformed into the Supreme Soviet of the autonomous republic and was headed by Nikolay Bagrov, chairman of the former regional soviet.

Vitaliy Kurashik, who headed the regional executive committee, was appointed as chairman of the council of ministers of the autonomous republic.

The session elected a commission to elaborate a constitution of the Crimean ASSR.

The Crimean autonomy was abolished in 1946 and restored as a result of the referendum held in Crimea last year. Legally, it was sealed by the law of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic on restoring the Crimean Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic of February 12, 1991.

The session decided to elect people's deputies to the republican parliament from among representatives of the deported peoples of Crimea. By-elections will be held by secret ballot at conferences of the Armenian, Bulgarian, Greek, Crimean Tatar and German national-cultural and cultural-enlightenment societies of the autonomous republic.

Caucasus

Ministry Troops Call for South Ossetian Talks

LD2203193291 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1745 GMT 22 Mar 91

[By TASS correspondent Valeriy Shanayev]

[Text] Vladikavkaz, 22 Mar (TASS)—The situation in South Ossetia remains very tense and explosive. As the press center of the emergency committee attached to the chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the North Ossetia Soviet Socialist Republic reported, this is due to the fact that a great many illegal Georgian and Ossetian formations in the conflict zone are well-stocked with weapons and equipment.

Today, on the initiative of representatives of the USSR Internal Affairs Ministry [MVD] troops, attempts were made once again to get talks going between the leaders of the armed groups of the opposing sides. Although an agreement was achieved earlier, on the temporary nonuse of weapons, shots once again rang out around Tskhinvali last night. Intensive submachine gun and large calibre machine gun fire raged for two hours between the Georgian village of Eredvi and the Ossetian village of Dmenisi. Those seriously wounded have been taken to the oblast hospital.

According to reports from the North Ossetia MVD, the talks are not achieving their aim since both sides have armed formations that are not submitting to the leaders who are prepared to hold talks.

The fate of the 28 Ossetians seized as hostages on 16 and 18 March at the villages of Kekhvi and Vanati and taken away to an unknown destination is worrying.

Pickets from illegal armed Georgian formations continue to rob and drive Ossetian families from their homes. That is happening in around 30 populated areas of the oblast. There are instances of Ossetian nationals in the Borzhomi, Gurdzhaani, and other rayons of Georgia being forced out. Georgian families, abandoning their homes, are leaving the conflict zone, too.

According to official data of the USSR MVD, the overall number of refugees from both sides runs to over 25,000 people.

As before, South Ossetia is in the grip of an economic and food blockade. In the words of Khubulov [name as received], chief of the Internal Affairs Directorate of South Ossetia, the group of USSR MVD troops is being strengthened in the oblast, and the number of the operational and investigative workers is increasing. The interior troops are performing their duty bravely, but they cannot act more decisively: There is no relevant order.

Over the past 24 hours, around another 300 refugees arrived in North Ossetia.

Shooting Heard in Tskhinvali

LD2303154491 Moscow TASS in English 1528 GMT 23 Mar 91

[By TASS correspondent Valeriy Shanayev]

[Text] Vladikavkaz March 23 TASS—Shooting was heard in Tskhinvali and its suburbs on Friday night, a spokesman for the emergency committee at the North Ossetian president [as received] told TASS.

Economic blockade of South Ossetia continues. Electric energy, gas and water is supplied to Tskhinvali irregularly. All roads, along which humanitarian aid was brought to the city, are blocked. It is impossible to deliver to Tskhinvali foodstuffs brought to Dzhava from North Ossetia.

The number of refugees to North Ossetia from Georgia's Ossetian- populated villages is growing. Over 15,000 refugees have been registered in Vladikavkaz, mainly children, women and elderly people. The republic's leadership is taking urgent measures to accommodate them.

Situation Update in S. Ossetia

LD2303140291 Moscow TASS in English 1234 GMT 23 Mar 91

[by TASS correspondent Albert Kochetkov]

[Text] Tbilisi March 23 TASS—The situation tends to stabilise in South Ossetia.

According to the Georgian Interior Ministry press centre, no shooting or fires have been reported on Friday. New emergency district commandant Colonel T. Epitashvili with the help of Soviet Interior Ministry troops is taking active measures to normalise the situation.

Recently, Interior Ministry troops have invigorated their actions against robber gangs. On Friday, the commandant met a large group of Ossetians. They demanded that police and Interior Ministry troops strictly prevent actions by gangs of criminals, who had arrived in South Ossetia from various regions of the country. Speakers listed facts of robberies and oppressions of both Georgians and Ossetians.

Ossetia Cease-Fire Accord Observed

LD2403124791 Moscow TASS in English 1236 GMT 24 Mar 91

[By TASS correspondent Albert Kochetkov]

[Text] Tbilisi March 24 TASS—There has been no shooting and fires in Tskhinvali for the third day, a spokesman for the Georgian Interior Ministry told TASS. The warring parties honour the terms of the ceasefire accord. Radio communication was established between them. Negotiations are under way to stabilise the situation in the region.

According to information from military sources, Soviet Interior Ministry troops ceased to clear obstructions and barricades because the local population is against this.

'Pogroms' Rumored

LD2403173691 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1540 GMT 24 Mar 91

[By TASS correspondent Valeriy Shanayev]

[Text] Vladikavkaz, 24 Mar (TASS)—From this vantage point the situation in South Ossetia looks alarming. It is continuing to grow worse. Sporadic clashes between vigilantes belonging to illegal Georgian armed groups and the Ossetian side have escalated into combat involving the use of automatic weapons, heavy machine-guns, grenade launchers, and unguided rockets.

The press center at the North Ossetian [word indistinct] emergency committee has reported that Georgian fighters fired on Tskhinvali and the surrounding area last night. At midday today armed vigilantes carried out pogroms at houses and economic sites in the Ossetian village of Zelepi in Znaurskiy rayon and beat people. An hour later, another two Ossetian villages, Prinevi and Khslipi came under attack. Several houses were burned down.

There has been continuous firing for the last four days between the opposing sides on the outskirts of the Georgian village of Eredvi and the Ossetian village of Dmanisi. Heavy weapons are being used to fire on houses. This has led to eight people of Ossetian nationality being wounded. A unit of the USSR Ministry of Internal Affairs internal troops has gone to the scene of the clashes to put a stop to the conflict. However, firing is continuing.

According to reports from the Ministry of Internal Affairs of North Ossetia, attempts by representatives of the USSR Ministry of Internal Affais internal troops to hold talks with the leaders of the Georgian armed unis have failed to produce any results. On the Georgian side, certain armed groups are not obeying their leaders who have taken part in talks. The Ossetian side has responded positively to holding a peace dialogue with officers of the USSR Ministry of Internal Affairs internal troops.

Georgian, Russian Leaders Discuss Conflict

LD2403193991 Moscow TASS in English 1910 GMT 24 Mar 91

[Text] Tbilisi March 24 TASS—Russian President Boris Yeltsin and his Georgian counterpart Zviad Gamsakhurdia met on Saturday in the Georgian town of Kazbegi.

The sides agreed to set up in April working groups to prepare for signing a draft treaty on Russian-Georgian relations.

They agreed that Russian and Georgian interior ministries will set up a joint commission to study the situation in South Ossetia and present results by April 20.

The ministries were also ordered to set up a joint police unit to disarm illegal armed groups in "former South-Ossetian autonomous region", according to a joint protocol.

The sides also decided to call on the Soviet defence ministry to redeploy Soviet army units from South Ossetia.

Russian, Georgian and North Ossetian councils of ministers were told to begin work to return refugees to their homes. The sides agreed to restore legitimate authorities.

The governments of Georgia, Russia and North Ossetia were told to set up a commission to evaluate and compensate damages incurred on refugees.

All measures aim to restore peace and calm in the region, the protocol stressed.

The sides agreed to set up a group to monitor the implementation of the protocol.

Situation Begins To Calm in Tskhinvali

AU2503103191 Tbilisi Domestic Service in Georgian 0500 GMT 25 Mar 91

[Text] The press center of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Georgia reports that, according to information supplied by Tengiz Epitashvili, the military commander of the town of Tskhinvali, the situation was completely calm yesterday [24 March] and this morning in Tskhinvali and in neighboring villages.

Mediation Attempts in Samachablo Conflict

AU2203163391 Tbilisi Domestic Service in Russian 1445 GMT 22 Mar 91

[Text] On the evening of 21 March, Ossetian extremists resumed their attacks against the Georgian militia and against the Georgian villages of Samachablo [South Ossetia]. Throughout the night, they fired rockets on the militia post situated near the entrance to Tskhinvali and on the villages of Zemo-Nikozi, Eredvi, and Tamarasheni. Groups of Georgian militiamen are now stationed in these villages, and the population is relatively under protection. However, it is impossible to provide full security for the population of smaller villages. Fortunately, there were no casualties, although the firing also continued on the morning of 22 March.

These days, Georgian militiamen have been conducting negotiations with representatives of the Ossetian population in Tskhinvali. They even came to an agreement to stop firing, and this could become the beginning of a peaceful settlement of the conflict. The role of mediators was assumed by people's deputies of the RSFSR, deputies of supreme soviets of the Russian Federation, Belorussia, and representatives of the Ukrainian society Rukh who are presently staying in Tskhinvali.

In connection with this [word indistinct], the militia's Lieutenant-Colonel Akaki (?Bocholishvili), chief of the provisional headquarters of the Georgian Interior Ministry, has declared: The All-Union Press and Central Television are trying to prove that Tskhinvali is allegedly under blockade and that the Georgian militiamen are allegedly firing at the peaceful population. However, what is happening in reality is as follows: All the foodstuffs and manufactured goods intended for Tskhinvali are being delivered on trucks to the town's entrance. However, it is the Ossetian extremists standing on guard there who are dealing with all these goods so that they do not reach the population. As for the alleged attacks of the militiamen against the peaceful population, this is slander for the purpose of provocation. To avoid any misunderstanding, [word indistinct] of the deputies [must] be given to the opposite side. Let two of their representatives remain permanently at the militia posts near the entrance to Tskhinvali and compile a list of how many trucks loaded with foodstuffs actually enter Tskhinvali or which side starts firing first. The deputies have approved of our terms. However, the opposite side is still keeping silence. We are deeply convinced that the Ossetian population is in favor of a peaceful settlement of the conflict but it has been intimidated by the numerous gangs that have arrived from various regions, gangs that had, first, robbed Georgian families and, after the Georgians left Tskhinvali, began to rob the Ossetians.